A

COMMENTARY

ON THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES:

CRITICAL, DOCTRINAL, AND HOMILETICAL,

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MINISTERS AND STUDENTS.

BY

JOHN PETER LANGE, D. D.,

ORDINARY PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN,

IN CONNECTION WITH A NUMBER OF EMINENT EUROPEAN DIVINES.

TRANSLATED, ENLARGED, AND EDITED

BY

PHILIP SCHAFF, D. D.,

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK,

IN CONNECTION WITH AMERICAN SCHOLARS OF VARIOUS EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS.

VOLUME XVI. OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: CONTAINING THE MINOR PROPHETS.

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1874.

THE

MINOR PROPHETS.

EXEGETICALLY, THEOLOGICALLY, AND HOMILETICALLY

EXPOUNDED

BY

PAUL KLEINERT, OTTO SCHMOLLER,
GEORGE R. BLISS, TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, CHARLES ELLIOTT,
JOHN FORSYTH, J. FREDERICK McCURDY, AND
JOSEPH PACKARD.

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PREFACE BY THE GENERAL EDITOR.

THE volume on the MINOR PROPHETS is partly in advance of the German original, which has not yet reached the three post-exilian Prophets. The commentaries on the nine earlier Prophets by Professors KLEINERT and SCHMOLLER appeared in separate numbers some time ago[1]; but for Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, Dr. Lange has not, to this date, been able to secure a suitable co-laborer.[2] With his cordial approval I deem it better to complete the volume by original commentaries than indefinitely to postpone the publication. They were prepared by sound and able scholars, in conformity with the plan of the whole work.

The volume accordingly contains the following parts, each one being paged separately:—

1. A GENERAL INTRODUCTION to the PROPHETS, especially the MINOR PROPHETS, by Rev. CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D., Professor of Biblical Exegesis in Chicago, Illinois. The general introductions of Kleinert and Schmoller are too brief and incomplete for our purpose, and therefore I requested Dr. ELLIOTT to prepare an independent essay on the subject.

2. HOSEA. By Rev. Dr. OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated from the German and enlarged by JAMES FREDERICK MCCURDY, M. A., of Princeton, N. J.

3. JOEL. By OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated and enlarged by Rev. JOHN FORSYTH, D. D., LL. D., Chaplain and Professor of Ethics and Law in the United States Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.

4. AMOS. By OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated and enlarged by Rev. TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D. D., Pastor of the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church, New York.

5. OBADIAH. By Rev. PAUL KLEINERT, Professor of Old Testament Theology in the University of Berlin. Translated and enlarged by Rev. GEORGE R. BLISS, D. D., Professor in the University of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

6. JONAH. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of the University of Berlin. Translated and enlarged by Rev. CHARLES ELLIOTT, Professor of Biblical Exegesis in Chicago.[3]

7. MICAH. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of Berlin, and Prof. GEORGE R. BLISS, of Lewisburg.

8. NAHUM. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of Berlin, and Prof. CHARLES ELLIOTT, of Chicago.

9. HABAKKUK. By Professors KLEINERT and ELLIOTT.

1 *Obadjah, Jonah, Micha, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanjah. Wissenshaftlich und für den Gebrauch der Kirche ausgelegt von* PAUL KLEINERT, *Pfarrer zu St. Gertraud und a. Professor an der Universität zu Berlin.* Bielefeld u. Leipzig, 1868. — *Die Propheten Hosea, Joel und Amos. Theologisch-homiletisch bearbeitet von* OTTO SCHMOLLER, *Licent. der Theologie, Diaconus in Urach.* Bielef. und Leipzig, 1872.

2 The commentary of Rev. W. PRESSEL on these three Prophets (*Die nachexilischen Propheten*, Gotha, 1870) was originally prepared for Lange's *Bible-work*, but was rejected by Dr. Lange mainly on account of Pressel's views on the genuineness and integrity of Zechariah. It was, however, independently published, and was made use of, like other commentaries, by the authors of the respective sections in this volume.

3 Dr. Elliott desires to render his acknowledgments to the Rev. Reuben Dederick, of Chicago, and the Rev. Jacob Lotke, of Faribault, Minnesota, for valuable assistance in translating some difficult passages in Kleinert's Commentaries on Jonah, Nahum, and Habakkuk.

10. ZEPHANIAH. By Professors KLEINERT and ELLIOTT.

11. HAGGAI. By JAMES FREDERICK McCURDY, M. A., Princeton, N. J.

12. ZECHARIAH. By Rev. TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D. D., New York. (See special preface.)

13. MALACHI. By Rev. JOSEPH PACKARD, D. D., Professor of Biblical Literature in the Theological Seminary at Alexandria, Virginia.

The contributors to this volume were directed carefully to consult the entire ancient and modern literature on the Minor Prophets and to enrich it with the latest results of German and Anglo-American scholarship.

The remaining parts of the Old Testament are all under way, and will be published as fast as the nature of the work will permit.

PHILIP SCHAFF.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK, *January*, 1874.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

PROPHETIC WRITINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,

AND ESPECIALLY TO THE

MINOR PROPHETS.

BY

CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D.

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE AND EXEGESIS, IN THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE NORTHWEST, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

MINOR PROPHETS.[1]

I.

Meaning of the Words Prophet and Prophecy.

The ordinary Hebrew word for prophet is *Nâbi* (Heb. נָבִיא), derived from the verb נָבָא which is connected by Gesenius with נָבַע. The former of these verbs is used in the Niphal and Hithpael species in the sense of *speaking under a divine influence:* the latter signifies in the Kal, *to boil forth, to gush out, to flow,* as a fountain. If this etymology is correct, the noun will designate a person, who bursts forth with spiritual utterances under the divine impulse, or simply one who pours forth words. Freytag defines the corresponding word in Arabic (نَبَأَ), *editus, elatus fuit, annuntiavit, renuntiavit alter alteri, se prophetam dixit, propheticum munus vindicavit sibi.* 1. *Nâbi.*

The form נָבִיא is like that of קָטִיל, and is taken by some in a passive sense, literally, *one who is divinely inspired.* This is the opinion of Bunsen and Davidson. But Ewald, Hävernick, Oehler, Hengstenberg, Bleek, Lee, Pusey, McCaul, and the great majority of Biblical critics, prefer the active sense of *announcing, pouring forth* the declarations of God, as more in accordance with the usage of the word.

Two other Hebrew words are used to designate a prophet, namely, רֹאֶה and חֹזֶה. Both these words signify *one who sees,* and are usually rendered in the LXX. by βλέπων, or ὁρῶν, sometimes by προφήτης (1 Chron. xxvi. 28; 2 Chron. xvi. 7, 10). The three words occur in 1 Chron. xxix. 29, where they seem to be contrasted with each other: "Now the acts of David the King, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer (*Roëh*), and in the book of Nahum the prophet (*Nâbi*), and in the book of Gad the seer (*Chozeh*). *Roëh* is used twelve times in the Bible (1 Sam. ix. 9, 11, 18, 19; 2 Sam. xv. 27; 1 Chron. ix. 22; xxvi. 28; xxix. 29; 2 Chron. xvi. 7, 10; Is. xxx. 10), and in seven of these it is applied to Samuel. It was superseded in general use by the word *Nâbi*, by which Samuel himself was designated as well as by *Roëh* (1 Sam. iii. 20; 2 Chron. xxxv. 18), and which seems to have revived after a period of desuetude (1 Sam. ix. 9), and to have been applied to the company of prophets mentioned in 1 Sam. x. 5, 10, 11, 12, and in xix. 20, 24. The verb רָאָה, from which it is derived, is the common word in prose signifying "to see;" חָזָה — whence comes the substantive חֹזֶה — is more poetical. חָזוֹן, another derivative, is the word constantly used for the prophetical vision. It is found in Samuel, Chronicles, Psalms, Proverbs, and in most of the prophets. 2. *Roëh and Chozeh.*

It has been much debated whether there is any difference in the usage of these words,

[1] The books used most in preparing this Introduction are Hengstenberg's *Christology*, Dean Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*, Auberlen *On Daniel*, Fairbairn *On Prophecy*, Davison *On Prophecy*, Stuart's *Hints on Prophecy*, Bleek's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Keil's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Alexander's Introduction to his *Commentary on Isaiah*, Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, and Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopædia*. See also the list of Commentaries on the Prophets at the close of the Introduction, No. IX.; and Knobel's *Prophetismus der Hebräer* (1837, 2 vols.); Delitzsch's *Biblisch-prophet. Theologie* (1845); Gust. Baur's *Gesch. der alt. test. Weissagung* (1861 sqq.).

and if any, what that difference is. Some consider *Nâbi* to express the official prophet, that is, one who belonged to the prophetic order, while *Roëh* and *Chozeh* denote those who received a prophetical revelation. The case of Gad is supposed to afford a clue to the difficulty. In 2 Sam. xxiv. 11, this prophet is described as the "*Nâbi;*" in 1 Chron. xxi. 9, as David's "*Chozeh;*" and in 2 Chron. xxix. 25, as the King's "*Chozeh,*" while Nathan is styled in the same place "*the Nâbi.*" Hence it has been suggested that *Chozeh* was the special designation of the prophet attached to the royal household; and that this individual might, at the same time, be a *Nâbi*. Perhaps it is safe to say that the same persons were designated by the three words *Nâbi*, *Roëh*, and *Chozeh*, the last two titles being derived from the mode of receiving the divine communications; the first, from the utterance of them to others. In any view of the case there can be little doubt that *Nâbi* was employed to designate one who belonged to the prophetic order. When Gregory Nazianzen (*Or.*, 28) calls Ezekiel ὁ τῶν μεγάλων ἐπόπτης καὶ ἐξηγητὴς μυστηρίων, he gives a sufficiently exact translation of the two titles *Chozeh* or *Roëh*, and *Nâbi*.[1]

The word *prophet* does not merely signify one who predicts future events; nor is the term *prophecy* restricted to the prediction of such events.

The word *Nâbi* is uniformly translated in the LXX. by προφήτης, and in the A. V. by "prophet." The proper sense of πρὸ is *before*, in *front*, as opposed to ὄπισθε, *behind*. Hence, according to the best lexicographers, the idea of priority in time is given as secondary to that of antecedence and priority in place. This view would give to πρό in πρόφημι and προφήτης, a *local* instead of a *temporal* signification. Προφήτης would, in that case, denote an authoritative speaker in the name of God; and it is applied in this sense, in the Classics, to the official expounders of the oracles, and to poets, as the prophets of the Muses, *i. e.*, as speaking in their name, at their suggestion, or by their inspiration.

The classical passage as to the meaning of the word *Nâbi* is Exodus iv. 14–16: "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth; and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." Take in connection with this Ex. vii. 1: "I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet" (*Nâbi*); and the meaning of the word becomes plain. It means, one who speaks for another; who utters the words that another has put into his mouth. His communications may have reference to the past, to the present, or to the future; and may also extend to absolute and universal truth. These communications constitute prophecy.

Restriction of the terms *prophet* and *prophecy*, in modern usage.

The restriction, in modern usage, of the term *prophet* to one who predicts future events, and *prophecy* to the prediction of these events, has arisen from the fact that a large portion of the prophetic writings, and precisely that very portion which is most likely to impress the reader, is of this description. But these words do not admit of any such restriction in the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament. In these they admit of the sense of *declaration* and *interpretation*.

In the latter sense it was used by Lord Bacon, who speaks of an exercise called *prophesying*. "The ministers within a precinct," says Lord Bacon, "did meet upon a week day in some principal town, where there was some ancient grave minister that was president, and an auditory of gentlemen, or other persons of leisure. Then every minister successively, beginning with the youngest, did handle one and the same part of Scripture, spending severally some quarter of an hour or better, and in the whole some two hours. And so the exercise being begun and concluded with prayer, and the president giving a text for the next meeting, the assembly was dissolved." Jeremy Taylor uses the word, in the same sense, in his treatise *On Liberty of Prophesying*. A book was published at Oxford, in 1838, bearing the title, *On the Prophetical Office of the Church*, in which the adjective "prophetical" has evidently no reference to prediction.

1 See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. "Prophet;" Kitto's *Bib. Cyclopædia*, s. v. "Prophecy;" Lee *On the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, Appendix J; and *Aids to Faith*, Essay iii., "Prophecy."

II.

Prophetical Institution and Order.[1]

The Prophetical Institution provided for in the Law.

The Law provides for the Prophetical Institution (Deut. xviii.); hence it was no expedient resorted to on special emergencies. Though the prediction (Deut. xviii.) specially relates, as the gospel history shows, to the one distinguished Prophet, "of whom Moses in the Law did write," yet the context (vers. 20, 21, 22) clearly shows that a succession of inferior prophets was included. The gift of prophecy was closely connected with the general design of the Old Economy, the foundation of which was the Law recorded in the Pentateuch. In the Law, as an epitome, the rest of the Old Testament is contained, as to its seminal principles. The later books are virtually a development and application of what is comprised in the Pentateuch. To make this development and application the prophetical order was instituted.

The Scriptures do not represent an unbroken series of prophets, each inducted into office by his predecessor.

The Scriptures do not represent an unbroken series of prophets, each inducted into office by his predecessor. At least, they are silent on this point, except in the cases of Joshua and Elisha, the former of whom was inducted into office by Moses, and the latter by Elijah. The prophets are described as deriving their prophetical character immediately from God, and do not seem to have attached much importance to a series of incumbents, each receiving his commission from another, or from others. It was different with the priesthood, whose succession and induction into office were strictly prescribed.

From the days of Joshua to Eli "there was no open vision" (1 Sam. iii. 1). Under the judges the original constitution remained unchanged, though the nation was subjected to many vicissitudes of fortune. But in the time of Samuel marked changes passed over the state, and others were imminent. Kingly government was established; the priesthood was to be transferred, the kingdom to be dismembered, and the nation to be led into captivity. Changes so serious needed special interposition. Hence the revival and enlargement of prophetic revelation. From Samuel to Malachi prophet followed prophet, in unbroken continuity, predicting the great changes that were coming upon the nation, and denouncing the sins that provoked the justice of heaven.

Nature of prophetic inspiration.

Many portions of the prophetical writings are of such a character, that the writers could not have recorded them without a special communication from heaven. They are, strictly speaking, *Revelations*. Other portions are not of this nature. They are such as must have been familiar to the sacred writers. Historical incidents were continually occurring around them of which they were cognizant. While it is evident that a supernatural knowledge was necessary in the former case, it is not so evident in the latter. They might have recorded historical events, as other historians have done, without any special divine aid. They might have done so, but they did not. In the former case they spoke by revelation, and in the latter by the inspiration[2] of the Holy Spirit. This they claim, and the writers of the New Testament accord it to them (2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 21). They preface their announcements with "Thus saith the Lord'."

In regard to the nature of prophetic inspiration, it is sufficient to state that it was plenary, or fully adequate to the attainment of the end. It is vain and needless to attempt any description of its mode. So far as anything can be inferred from incidental or explicit statements of the Scripture, the most usual method of communication would appear to have been that of immediate vision. Micaiah *saw* (1 Kings xxii. 17); Isaiah *saw* (Is. vi. 1); *Seer* and *Vision* are used for *prophet* and *prophecy*.

Some have supposed that the prophets, under the influence of inspiration, were in a condition expressed by the Greek word ἔκστασις, *i. e.*, in a state of subjection to a higher power. Their own faculties, according to this view, were held in complete abeyance. Such

1 See Alexander's *Introduction to the Prophecies of Isaiah.*

2 A distinction is made between *revelation* and *inspiration*. By *revelation* is meant a direct communication from God to man, either of such knowledge as man could not of himself attain to, or which was not, in point of fact, from whatever cause, known to the person who received the revelation. *Inspiration*, on the other hand, is that actuating energy of the Holy Spirit, guided by which the human agents chosen by God have officially declared his will by word of mouth, or have committed to writing the several portions of the Bible. — *Lee on Inspiration*, pp. 40, 41.

a condition of mind was regarded as a natural and necessary sign of inspiration, on the part of the pretended prophets and diviners of the heathen. They exhibited the outward signs of violent excitement, resembling insanity. Hence the etymological affinity of the Greek words μάντις, μανία, and μαίνομαι. The early fathers uniformly speak of this maniacal excitement as characteristic of the inspiration claimed by the heathen diviners; and describe the inspiration of the Hebrew prophets as distinguished by the opposite peculiarities of calmness, self-possession, and active intelligence. Their minds may have been, on certain occasions, in a highly elevated state; but we have no reason to think that their mental condition was a morbid one. The action of the Holy Spirit did not supersede the exercise of their own intelligence: He spoke *in* them, not *by* them as mere instruments; and they, while uttering or recording his communications, preserved each his distinct individuality.

Had the prophets any training for their work?

It is the general opinion that Samuel instituted companies, or colleges of prophets; and that "the sons of the prophets" mentioned in Scripture, were young men in a course of preparation for the prophetic ministry. We find one of these companies, or colleges, during Samuel's life-time, at Ramah (1 Sam. xix. 19, 20); others afterwards at Bethel (2 Kings ii. 3); Jericho (2 Kings ii. 5); Gilgal (2 Kings iv. 38); and elsewhere (2 Kings vi. 1). These colleges were probably, in their constitution and object, similar to our theological seminaries, which are sometimes called "Schools of the Prophets." Into them were gathered promising students, and there they were trained for the office which they were destined to fill. So successful were these institutions, that from the time of Samuel to the completion of the Canon of the Old Testament, there seems never to have been wanting a due supply of men to keep up the line of official prophets.

To this it may be objected that the ministry of the prophets depended on the gift of inspiration, for which no human training could compensate, or prepare them. But although they could not act as prophets without inspiration, they might be prepared for those parts of their work which depended upon literary culture.

Had the prophets a full knowledge of what they predicted.

The prophets, though inspired, were not omniscient. They were the spokesmen of God, the mouth of God to communicate his messages to men. They had *visions*; they *saw*: pictures were presented to their spiritual intuition; but their understandings were not so miraculously enlarged as to grasp the whole of the divine counsels, which they were commissioned to enunciate. We have the testimony of the prophets themselves (Dan. xii. 8; Zech. iv. 5; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11) that they did not comprehend them. These passages, however, have been pushed so far by some as to make it appear that the prophets were only speaking machines. This extreme must be avoided as well as the other, which would make them omniscient. The writer of the article on Prophecy, in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, commenting on 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, says, that the prophets "after having uttered predictions on those subjects occupied themselves in searching into the full meaning of the words that they had uttered." This statement is perhaps not sufficiently guarded. The Apostle writes: ἐρευνῶντες εἰς τίνα ἢ ποῖον καιρόν, in which τίνα is interrogative and agrees with καιρόν, and not with πράγματα understood. If the Apostle had designed to say, that the prophets searched into *what things they had uttered*, he would have written: εἰς τίνα, καὶ ποῖον καιρόν. The expression should, therefore, be rendered, *searching what time, or what manner of time*. This conveys a very different idea, and makes the object of the prophets' search, not the *meaning of the words* which they had uttered, but *some additional knowledge* concerning the subjects of which they had spoken. Zech. iv. 5 may mean no more than that the prophet did not understand the symbols mentioned in the preceding verses.

In Dan. xii. 8, the prophet declares that he "heard, but understood not." This evidently relates to what was suggested to his mind by the declarations of ver. 7, where it is said that the end of the wonders shall be after "a time, times, and a half." Daniel does not inquire like the angel, in ver 6, "how long" (עַד־מָתַי) "shall it be to the end of these wonders?" but "what shall be the end" (אַחֲרִית) "of these things." If אַחֲרִית (*end, latter state, final lot*) means the same as קֵץ (*end*) in ver. 6, the interrogative מָה (*what*) used by Daniel is inappropriate. His question, therefore, must have respect to the *state of things* at the close of the "time, times, and a half," ver. 7.[1]

[1] *Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy*. By M. Stuart. Second Edition. Andover, 1842. Pages 54–57.

A full discussion of this point is not necessary to the present purpose. The prophets, in many cases, saw "through a glass darkly;" but they did not, like mere *automata*, utter words which they did not understand. They were inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, whose will they revealed. "Unto them it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" (1 Pet. i. 12).

Relation of the prophets to the people.

The prophets had a practical office to discharge. It was part of their commission to show the people of God "their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." — (Is. lviii. 1; Ezek. xxii. 2; xliii. 10; Micah iii. 8.) They were, therefore, pastors and ministerial monitors of the people of God. It was their duty to admonish and reprove, to denounce prevailing sins, to threaten the people with the terrors of divine judgment and call them to repentance. They also brought the message of consolation and pardon (Is. xl. 1, 2). They were watchmen set upon the walls of Zion to blow the trumpet and give timely warning of approaching danger (Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 7, 8, 9; Jer. vi. 17; Is. lxii. 6).

The relation of the prophets to the people bore a greater resemblance to that of the Christian ministry than to that of the priests. The latter approached God in behalf of men, by means of sacrifice; the former approached men in behalf of God. They were his ambassadors, beseeching men to turn from their evil ways and live. The functions of the prophetical office were, therefore, not identical with those of the priesthood. The prophets were not priests, with the exception of Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Jer. i. 1: Ezek. i. 3).

They do not seem to have sustained any definite or fixed relation to the government. They were not officers of state, though they exerted an influence upon rulers and state affairs. This they did not by official formal action, but as special messengers from God, whose divine legation even the apostate kings of Israel acknowledged. Sometimes the kings refused to hear the prophet's message; but such obstinacy was the sealing of their doom.

Mode of life of the prophets.

It is not easy to determine the mode of life which the prophets led. It was probably subject to no uniform and rigid law. Some have inferred from Elijah's hairy dress and John the Baptist's imitation of it, that they were distinguished by a peculiar dress and an ascetic mode of life. But the conclusion is too hasty. Their dress sometimes may have been a "sermo propheticus realis," to teach the people what they ought to do, and not a piece of asceticism. They do not seem to have been anxious of attracting notice by ostentatious display; nor did they seek wealth, but some of them, and probably the most of them, lived in poverty and want (1 Kings xiv. 3; 2 Kings iv. 1, 38, 42; vi. 5). It is probable that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 37, 38) alludes to the sufferings and privations of the prophets especially, in their temporal humiliation, a vivid representation of which we have in the lives of Elijah and Elisha, in the books of the Kings; and in the case of Jeremiah, who concludes the description of his sufferings (chap. xx.) by cursing the day of his birth. Repudiated by the world in which they were aliens, they typified the life of Him, whose appearance they announced, and whose spirit dwelt in them. Their persecution and suffering did not arise from opposition to them as a distinct class, leading an unsociable, ascetic mode of life, but from opposition to their faithful ministry. From the very nature of that ministry, it was exempted from the rules of outward uniformity. Eichhorn has justly mentioned as a characteristic difference between the heathen and the Jewish prophets, that whereas the former tried to enhance their authority by darkness and seclusion, and mysterious accompaniments, the latter moved among the people without any such factitious advantages.

Other topics, concerning the prophetical office, the functions and mode of life of the prophets, will readily occur to the careful reader of the Holy Scriptures. The mere mention of some of these must suffice. The prophets were the national poets of Israel. Music, poetry, and hymns were a part of the studies of the class from which, generally speaking, they were derived. They were annalists and historians. A great portion of their writings is direct or indirect history. According to the testimony of Josephus the whole of the Old Testament was written by them. They were preachers of patriotism. Their patriotism, as subjects of the theocracy, was founded on motives of religion. The enemy of the nation was the enemy of God. Hence their denunciation of an enemy was a denunciation of a representative of evil; their exhortations in behalf of Jerusalem were exhortations in behalf of God's kingdom on earth.

III.

Contents and Sphere of the Prophetical Writings.

The contents are doctrinal and predictive.

As the function of the prophet was not limited to the disclosure of the future, but included in it the expounding and application of the Law, the declaration of God's will in regard to present duty and of absolute and universal truth, so the prophetic volume is not confined to prediction. In accordance with this twofold character of the prophetic office, it contains two elements, which may be called the *moral* or *doctrinal*, and the *predictive*.

These two parts not disjoined.

These two parts are not disjoined in the prophetical writings, neither were they disjoined in the design and communication of prophecy; but it will conduce to a better understanding of the subject to view them separately. The sequel, therefore, will exhibit a brief summary of the principal doctrines of the former, and the scheme of the latter.

Sphere of prophecy.

By the sphere of prophecy are meant the parties for whom it was given, and the objects which it more immediately contemplated. Prophecy, in its stricter sense of containing pre-intimations of good things to come, is for the benefit of the church. The church, consequently, is its proper sphere. Only in an incidental and remote manner could it have been intended to bear upon those without; for it was the revelation of the Lord's secret in regard to the future movements of his providence, which belongs peculiarly to them that fear him (Ps. xxv. 14). It was not a revelation, however, for such as might needlessly seek to pry into the future, but for the higher purpose, especially in times of darkness and perplexity, of furnishing the light that might be required for present faith and duty. It is not God's common method to lay open his hidden counsel respecting things destined to come to pass, even to the children of his covenant; for such knowledge, if imparted with any measure of fullness and precision, would be a dangerous possession, and would tend to destroy the simplicity of their trust in God, and beget an unhealthy craving after human calculations and worldly expedients. It is only, therefore, within certain limits, or in cases that may be deemed somewhat exceptional, that God can grant, even to his chosen, a prophetical insight into future events. In so far as it may be needful to awaken or sustain hope in times of darkness and discouragement, to inspire confidence in the midst of general backsliding and rebuke, at the approach of imminent danger to the life of faith, to give due intimation of the brooding evil, — at such times and for such purposes, God's merciful regard to the safety and well-being of his people may fitly lead Him to provide them with an occasional and partial disclosure of the future; but the same regard would equally constrain Him to withhold it when not necessary for the moral ends of his government.

Apparent exceptions to this view.

The cases of Balaam and Daniel, both of whom primarily disclosed to the enemies of God's kingdom the things destined to come to pass, may seem to conflict with the view that the church is the sphere of prophecy. Both these men, however, occupied a kind of exceptional position. They stood apart, not only from the prophetical order of men in Israel, but also from the common affairs of the church. Hence the writings of Daniel, notwithstanding their high prophetical character, have had a place assigned them in the Jewish Canon distinct from the writings of strictly prophetical men. But in regard to the point immediately before us, the grounds of exception are more apparent than real. For in the case of both Balaam and Daniel it was mainly for the light and encouragement of the church that the word of prophecy came by them; only the circumstances of the times were such as to render the camp of the enemy the most appropriate watch-tower, where it should be received and primarily made known. At both periods Israel had come into direct collision with the kingdoms of the world; in the one case as a new, in the other as a small and shattered power, standing over against others of mighty prowess, and, as might seem, of all-prevailing energy.[1]

Predictions against

There are prophecies against Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, and other kingdoms, which, as being delivered to the people of God to comfort them by revealing to them the fate of their enemies, cannot be considered as exceptions to the view taken. The proph-

1 Fairbairn *On Prophecy*, chapter iii.

ecy of Jonah, however, against Nineveh, is of a different character and seems to be exceptional. The prophet was sent to a heathen power to denounce the judgments of God against it. He did not, in his own land and among his own people, preach against Nineveh, but he entered the Great City itself and denounced the judgment of God against it. Jonah was a typical character and his mission to Nineveh may have been typical of the mission of Israel to be "a light of the Gentiles," and intended to awaken the nation to a consciousness of its mission; for not only the Messiah but the Israel of God was sent to be a mediator or connecting link between Jehovah and the nations.[1] The prophecy of Jonah, therefore, may not be really exceptional, as it may have been intended as a type to the ancient church of the mission, which it had neglected and forgotten. It had acted like Jonah, but with greater success, when he attempted to flee to Tarshish, in a merchant vessel, to evade the commission, which God had given him to discharge.

Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, Nineveh, and other kingdoms.

IV.

Doctrinal Prophecy.

It does not fall in with the aim of this introductory treatise to exhibit, in detail, all the doctrines taught in the prophetic writings. It is sufficient to notice briefly the principal ones, and to state their relation to the Law and the Gospel.

The prophetical Scriptures speak of God as an eternal, self-existent, and spiritual Being. They speak of Him as a person, — a self-conscious, intelligent, moral and voluntary agent, doing all things according to the purpose of his own will. They ascribe to Him all the attributes of such a Being in infinite perfection.

Doctrine of God.

No doctrine is more plainly taught than the unity of God. "I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God" (Is. xliv. 6). At the same time the doctrine of a trinity of persons — a doctrine more fully developed in the New Testament — is clearly intimated. In Is. vii. 14 and ix. 6, 7, we read of the birth of a child, whose mother was a Virgin. That this child was the eternal son of God, equal with the Father, is proved—(1) from his name Immanuel, which means God with us, *i. e.*, God in our nature; (2) from his titles, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, Father of Eternity, and Prince of Peace; (3) from the character of his Kingdom: it is everlasting and universal. The prophet Micah predicted (chap. v. 1, 5) that one was to be born in Bethlehem, who was to be the Ruler of Israel, *i. e.*, of all the people of God. Although he was to be born in time and made of a woman, his goings forth were from of old, from everlasting. He was to manifest, in his government, the possession of divine attributes and glory. His dominion was to be universal and its effects peace.

Unity and Trinity.

We also read of the Spirit of Jehovah, to whom are ascribed intelligence and will. The possession of these implies personality. In Ezekiel (i. 4–28) it is the Spirit that animates the fourfold cherubim and their mystic wheels. It is the Spirit, who entered into the prophet and set him on his feet, and lifted him up between the earth and heaven, and brought him in a vision to Chaldæa, and said to him, "Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel. . . . . Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord" (Ezek. ii. 2–9). It was the Spirit that breathed life into the dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii. 9–14). Micah asks: "Is the Spirit of the Lord straightened"? (ii. 7). "I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord" (Micah iii. 8). Joel foretells the Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit (chap. ii. 28, 29). Many other passages might be adduced from the prophets, containing distinct notices of the presence and power of the Spirit. These passages, as parts of a progressive revelation perfected in the New Testament, cannot be made, by any process of criticism, to mean a mere divine influence.

The God of the prophets is the Creator of all things (Is. xlii. 5); and the upholder of all things (Jer. x. 23; xviii. 6; Dan. v. 23). They do not deify the laws of nature: these are only his ordinances and servants. They are the modes of his operation. He sits behind the elements that He has formed, giving birth and movement to all things. "When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of

Creation — general and particular Providence.

1 Alexander on Isaiah xlii. 6

waters in the heavens, and he causeth vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures" (Jer. x. 13). "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places" (Ps. cxxxv. 6). He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man. "The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. These all wait upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them, they gather: thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good" (Ps. civ. 14, 21, 27, 28). "O Lord, thou preservest man and beast" (Ps. xxxvi. 6). "Thy right hand upholdeth me." (Ps. lxiii. 8). These passages teach a universal, particular, and present Providence, controlling all things and directing their issues. It is not restricted to man, but extends to the beasts of the field. It is not confined to the Jewish theocracy, where it is displayed by more palpable manifestations; but it embraces Egypt and Babylon, Assyria and Persia, Moab and Ammon, the isles of the Gentiles, in a word, all the nations of the earth.

This Providence is asserted, when the event in question is brought about with no sensible disturbance of the ordinary influence of human motives; with no derangement of what is commonly called the natural course of things. Cyrus, for instance, whom the Greek historian describes, no doubt truly, as pursuing his career of conquest, in his own proper character, was only an instrument appointed for purposes of the divine government, which purposes the prophet Isaiah unfolds to us. Moses was a deliverer from Egypt, and Cyrus from Babylon: the former acted under an express legation, and was clothed with the power of working miracles; the latter had no such extraordinary power given to him. Yet divine Providence wrought by both; and so that Providence, in its ordinary course, is certain, active, and universal. Such is the account of the present constitution of things, which the tenor of prophecy affirms. In conformity with this account, the prophets deliver their predictions of future events, not as if they were announcing the bare truth of the future facts, but a purpose and design. They indulge a strain of prediction, which carries in itself the seed of its accomplishment, and sometimes declare themselves to have been constituted the agents of the divine counsels. "I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it" (Ezek. xxxvi. 36), is subjoined to the event declared. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it"? (Amos iii. 6). "See," saith the Lord to Jeremiah, "I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant" (Jer. i. 10). This language is figurative, for the prophet himself was not to do these things; but it is plain who was to do them. Again, "Hast thou not heard long ago, how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? Now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defenced cities into ruinous heaps" (Is. xxxvii. 26). The Assyrian desolator, in his grasping ambition, was the unconscious servant of an unseen Power, the instrument of that unerring wisdom that rules the world.

Prophecy is more or less a commentary upon the doctrine of divine providence. It represents the future event, which it brings to view, as a part of that system of things in which the Creator is present by the direction of his power, and the counsels of his wisdom, appointing the issues of futurity as well as foreseeing them; acting with "his mighty hand and outstretched arm" seen or unseen; ruling in the kingdoms of men, ordering all things in heaven and earth.

Man.

The anthropology of the prophets is as full and complete as their theology. Man was created by God (Mal. ii. 10); he has a common origin (*ibidem*); he has the power of reason (Ezek. xii. 2; Is. i. 18); a capacity for holiness (Is. i. 18); for knowledge and progress (Is. ii. 3, 4, 5); he is ruined and cannot save himself (Hos. xiii. 9; Jer. ii. 22; xiii. 23); he is a subject of God's moral government and owes entire obedience to his law (Dan. iv. 34, 35; Ezek. xviii. 4, 5, 9; xxxiii. 11-16; Is. i. 19, 20); worship and homage must be rendered to God (Mal. i. 11; iii. 10; Is. lx. 6, 7). The relations of men to one another are clearly stated, and the duties arising out of these relations enforced; in a word all the duties of the decalogue are strictly enjoined.

Faith.

Under the old dispensation, as well as under the new, the favor of God was secured by faith. The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans (i. 17), quotes, in confirmation of the doctrine of justification by faith, Habakkuk ii. 4. Throughout the prophetic writings we find exhortations to trust in Jehovah and the result of confidence in

Him. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength" (Is. xxvi. 3, 4). This confidence, in its ground and object, is not necessarily identical with evangelical faith, yet it is the same in principle. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews enumerates its effects; but in some of his instances, we are hardly warranted in assuming the existence of that faith, which justifies the sinner. Yet the doctrine of a justifying faith is clearly taught, and in some passages necessarily implied, in the law, and in the prophets, as the Apostle Paul asserts and proves, in his Epistle to the Romans (Rom. iii. 21; chap. iv. 3; compare Gen. xv. 6; Is. liii. 11; Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16).

Repentance.

The prophets inculcate with remarkable clearness and decision the doctrine of repentance. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Is. lv. 7). "Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, and for your abominations" (Ezek. xxxvi. 31; xx. 43). They preach the necessity of it, in order to escape ruin (Ezek. xiv. 6; xviii. 30). They invest it with a high moral dignity (Is. lvii. 15). They encourage it by promises (Hos. vi. 1, 2, 3; Joel ii. 12, 13).

The doctrinal teaching of the prophets intermediate between the Law and the Gospel.

The doctrinal teaching of the prophets is intermediate between the Law and the Gospel. It is a step in advance of the Law and preparatory to the Christian dispensation. It goes beyond the Law, in respect to the greater distinctness and fullness of some of its doctrines and precepts; it is a more perfect exposition of the principles of personal holiness and virtue; its sanctions have less of an exclusive reference to temporal promises and incline more to evangelical; the mere ritual of the Law begins to be discountenanced by it; and the superior value of a spiritual service is enforced. The Law had said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. vi. 5). Nothing could go beyond this commandment, in its extent; but where nothing can be added to extend a law, much may be added to expound it, animate its spirit, and direct its practice. It is precisely this that the prophets do. They everywhere recognize the authority of the Law of Moses, exalt its practical force, and improve its obligations. Thus like Him, to whom they all bear witness, they do not destroy the law, but fulfill it. In them we have the unfolding of those germinal principles, which attain to their full development in the teaching of Christ, the Head and Crown of the prophetic order.

V.

Predictive Prophecy. — Its Structure.

Twofold view.

A twofold view may be taken of predictive prophecy, — its structure and verification. The former constitutes the present theme of consideration.

Predictive prophecy and free agency.

A question may arise in regard to the personal liberty of men, who are the subjects of prophecy. If God has determined an event by prophecy and the agents to accomplish it. how can these agents be considered as acting freely? This question has difficulties, the solution of which does not fall in with the scope of this dissertation. All who receive, in sincerity, the statements of Scripture, must admit that the foreknowledge, or certain determination of the future actions of men, is compatible with their moral freedom. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). No greater difficulty lies against prophecy in regard to man's free agency than against preordination generally. Pharoah acted freely, though God raised him up to show in him his power, and to declare his name throughout all the earth (Ex. ix. 16). So also did Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar, though they were the chosen agents of God in accomplishing his purposes. It never once occurred to these men that they were mere blind instruments; for they were conscious of their freedom.

Another question may arise as to the absolute certainty of the fulfillment of a predicted future event. The question here is not whether any fixed purpose and determination of God is liable to be changed by the contingent actions of men; for in that respect, the truth, founded in God's nature, must stand fast forever. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. xxiii. 19.) The question is, whether prophecy ought to be regarded, in every instance, as announcing what is fixed and conclusively determined by God; or whether it should not to some extent, and if to some, then to what extent, be viewed as the proclamation of God's mind respecting his future dealings, on the supposition of the parties interested standing in a certain relationship to his character and government. In the latter case the prediction might assuredly be expected to take effect, in so far as the relations contemplated in it continued; but in the event of a change in these relations, then a corresponding change in regard to the prediction may reasonably be expected. This is the real question at issue among those who concur in holding prophecy to be a supernatural disclosure of God's mind and will.

Does the prediction of a future event render it absolute and certain?

"As everything future," says Olshausen on Matthew chap. xxiv., "even that which proceeds from the freedom of the creature, when viewed in relation to the divine knowledge, can only be regarded as *necessary*; so everything future, as far as it concerns man, can only be regarded as *conditional* upon the use of his freedom. As obstinate perseverance in sin hastens destruction, so genuine repentance may avert it; this is illustrated in the Old Testament, in the prophet Jonah, by the history of Nineveh, and intimated in the New Testament by Paul, when (like Abraham praying for Sodom) he describes the elements of good existing in the world as exercising a restraint upon the judgments of God (2 Thess. ii. 7); and 2 Pet. iii. 9, the delay of the Lord is viewed as an act of divine long-suffering, designed to afford men space for repentance. Accordingly when the Redeemer promises the near approach of his coming, this announcement is to be taken with the restriction (to be understood in connection with all predictions of judgments), 'All this will come to pass, unless men avert the wrath of God by sincere repentance.' None of the predictions of divine judgments are bare, historical proclamations of that which will take place; they are alarms calling men to repentance, — of which it may be said that they announce something for the very purpose that what they announce may *not* come to pass."

Olshausen's view.

Hengstenberg (art. "Prophecy," Kitto's *Cyclopædia*) says: "Some interpreters, misunderstanding passages like Jer. xviii. 8; xxvi. 13, have asserted with Dr. Köster (p. 226 ff.), that all prophecies were conditional, and have even maintained that their revocability distinguished the true predictions (*Weissagung*) from soothsaying (*Wahrsagung*). But beyond all doubt, when the prophet denounces the divine judgments, he proceeds on the assumption that the people will not repent, an assumption, which he knows from God to be true. Were the people to repent, the prediction would fail; but because they will not, it is uttered *absolutely*. It does not follow, however, that the prophet's warnings and exhortations are useless. These serve 'for a witness against them'; and besides, amid the ruins of the mass, individuals might be saved. Viewing prophecies as conditional predictions nullifies them. The Mosaic criterion (Deut. xviii. 22), that he was a false prophet who predicted 'things which followed not nor came to pass,' would then be of no value, since recourse might always be had to the excuse, that the case had been altered by the fulfilling of the condition. The fear of introducing fatalism, if the prophecies are not taken in a conditional sense, is unfounded; for God's omniscience, his foreknowledge, does not establish fatalism, and from divine omniscience simply is the prescience of the prophets to be derived."

Hengstenberg's view.

"These two forms of representation," Dr. Fairbairn remarks (Fairbairn *On Prophecy*. New York: Carlton & Porter, 1866), "may both be characterized as somewhat extreme, and neither of them can be applied to the actual interpretation of the prophetic Scriptures, without coming at many points into conflict with the undoubted facts of the case."

Fairbairn's view.

Dr. F., considering an exact classification impossible, on account of the concrete character of the prospective delineations of prophecy, and the readiness with which these in their diverse aspects run into each other, traces out a few broad and easily recognized distinctions, which, for all practical purposes, may be held to be sufficient.

1. "There is, first, a class of prophecies, the direct and proper object of which is to disclose God's purposes of grace to men, and indicate in its grander outlines their appointed course of development. As the ultimate ground of these purposes is plainly in God himself, and the bringing of them into accomplishment is emphatically his work, it is evident that, in respect to this line of things, there can be no room for the operation of any conditional element except in regard to the subordinate relations of place and time. Whether to be sooner or later in effecting the results aimed at, whether to be effected in this particular mode, or in some other that might be conceived, in such things, as the plan of God necessarily comes into contact with earthly relations and human agencies, it must presuppose a certain adaptation in the state of the world and the conduct of individual men. Hence, in these respects, announcements might be made at one time, which, *as seen from a human point of view*, appeared to have undergone a relative change at another; but the things themselves and all that essentially concerns their history and progressive operation in the world, being entirely and absolutely of God, must proceed in strict accordance with the intimations he gives of his mind respecting them.

"As examples of this great class of prophecies," Dr. Fairbairn points "to the original announcement of salvation by the triumph of the woman's seed over that of the tempter; to the promise given to Abraham that through his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed; to the successive limitations made as to the fulfillment of this promise in its main provisions, by its special connection with the tribe of Judah, the house of David, and a virgin-born son of that house; to the representations made of this glorious Being himself, of the constitution of his person, the place of his birth, the nature and circumstances of his career on earth, the character of his government, the final results and glories of his kingdom, with the opposite destinies of those who might set themselves in array against it. In regard to all that in this respect was purposed in the divine mind, and announced from time to time in the prophetic Word, there could be no room for any such conditional element as might in the least affect the question whether they should actually come to pass or not; for they were matters entering into the very core of the divine administration, and indissolubly linked to the great principles on which from the first all was destined to proceed. As concerns them, we have simply to do with the omniscience of God in foreseeing, his veracity in declaring, and his overruling providence in directing what should come to pass.

2. "Another class of prophecies, in their ostensible character and design widely different from the preceding, yet much akin as regards the point now under consideration, consists of those which, from time to time, were uttered concerning the powers and kingdoms that stood in a rival or antagonistic position to the Kingdom of God. It is not such prophecies generally, as respected those powers and kingdoms, that are now referred to, but those which were given forth *concerning* them, addressed not so properly to *them* as to the people of God, and for the purpose of allaying what naturally awoke fear and anxiety in the minds of believers. Predictions like that of Jonah to the Ninevites belong to an entirely different class; for in this there was a direct dealing with the people of a heathen city in respect to their sin and liability to punishment; a preaching more than a prediction; and both preaching and prediction entering into the sphere of human responsibility, and intended to operate as means of moral suasion. Nineveh was not at that time viewed as occupying a hostile position to the interests of God's kingdom in Israel, but as itself a hopeful field for spiritual agency; more hopeful indeed than Israel itself, and fitted to tell with a wholesome influence even on the people of the Covenant. The mass of prophecies, however, uttered respecting worldly powers and states, had an entirely different object. Contemplating these as rival, and for the most part directly antagonistic forces, they were mainly intended to assure the hearts of God's people that whatever earthly resources and glory might for the time belong to those kingdoms, all was destined to pass away; that their dominion, however arrogant and powerful, should come to an end; while that kingdom which was more peculiarly the Lord's, and was identified with his covenant of grace and blessing, should survive all changes and attain to an everlasting as well as universal supremacy. Prophecies of this description, therefore, stood in a very close relation to those already considered; they but exhibited the reverse side of God's covenant love and faithfulness. If the purposes of grace and holiness connected with his covenant were to stand, all counter authority and rival dominion must be put down; the safety and well-being of the one of necessity involved the destruction of the other. And to certify believers that such would be the result, was the more immediate

design of the prophecies in question; of the later prophecy, for example, uttered respecting Nineveh by Nahum, when the city had become the centre of a God-opposing monarchy; and of the many similar predictions scattered through the prophetic writings concerning Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Edom, and the surrounding heathen states.

"It holds of this class of prophecies as a whole, that in their grand aim they disclose the settled purposes of God: purposes that grow out of the essential principles of his character and government; and that the results they announce are consequently to be regarded as of an absolute character. As concerned the kingdoms themselves whose destinies they unfolded, they could scarcely be said to become, through the prophecies in question, except in a very limited degree, the subjects of moral treatment; for the prophecies were communicated to the covenant people rather than to them, and comparatively few of the heathen concerned might ever have come to any distinct knowledge of what had been spoken.

3. "Leaving now the two classes of prophecies which from their very nature can possess little or nothing of a conditional element, we proceed to notice those which purposely and directly bore upon men's responsibilities; those which by means of promise or threatening placed the subjects of divine revelation under the peculiar training of heaven. Here we find from the sacred records that the conditional element has often, as a matter of fact, been strikingly exhibited; and it must always, we conceive, be virtually if not formally and expressly found intermingling itself with prophetic intimations of the kind in question. This conditionality rests upon two great and fundamental principles. The first of these is, that in God's prophetical revelation of his dealing with men as in the revelations of his mind generally, all is based on an ethical foundation and directed to an ethical aim; so that the prediction should never be viewed apart from the moral considerations on account of or in connection with which it was uttered. And the other principle is, that in giving intimations to men or communities of approaching good or evil, God speaks as in other parts of Scripture in an anthropomorphic manner; He addresses the subjects of his threatening or promise more from a human than from a divine point of view; in other words, He adopts that mode of representation which is most natural to men, and which is best adapted for impressing and influencing their minds.

"Let us take, as an illustration of the proper working of these principles, the striking case of Nineveh already referred to. After having sent his prophet to announce the destruction of Nineveh in a specified time, the Lord suffered the prophecy to fall into abeyance, refrained from executing the threatened doom, or in the language of Scripture, He repented of the evil He said He would do to the city, because of the moral change that had meanwhile taken place among its inhabitants, as manifested in their turning from their evil ways." God acts on the principles of righteousness, and, in accordance with these, He must change his dealings toward men, when their relation to Him has become changed. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? (Gen. xviii. 25). "Hear now, O Israel, is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquities, and dieth in them; for the iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive" (Ezek. xviii. 25-27).

After these preliminary observations, we now proceed to trace the stream of prophecy from its beginning down to the close of the Old Testament Canon, when, as if expectant of the advent of its great subject, it comes to a sudden pause. A like cessation occurs between Joshua and Samuel, the reasons of which will be noticed in the proper place. With the exception of these two periods of cessation, and perhaps of some others, either not mentioned or not so distinctly marked, prophecy flows on with widening channel, until it reaches its appointed limits. In the time of Abraham it takes a double, though not a divergent course. This was necessary, as in him we have the first point of union, in prophecy, of the Jewish and Christian dispensations; and from this era it takes up and preserves a twofold character related to them both.

Date of prophecy.

The date and origin of the predictions of prophecy are coeval with the earliest history of man. This history is that of his creation, sin, and fall. No sooner had he fallen than prophecy intimated a way of recovery. The first prediction was given in mercy: it contained a promise adapted to man's forfeited condition. This was the promise of a Redeemer, who was appointed to bruise the serpent's head, that is, to spoil the

tempter of his triumph, which could only be done by repairing the loss suffered by transgression. This original promise is the dawn of prophecy. Man was not driven from Paradise, until prophecy had given him some pledge of hope and consolation.

It is not our intention to enter into an exposition of this first prophecy. Its general meaning is that a redemption will succeed the fall. The person of the Redeemer, who is to bruise the serpent's head, is not clearly revealed in the terms of the prediction. We are not, however, to infer that our first parents had no more instruction on the subject than that contained in the terms of the promise. God may have communicated much to them, which the sacred historian has not recorded. Their faith may have been directed to One, whose sacrifice was typified by the sacrifices that they offered.

The Protevangelium,[1] or first prophecy. Gen. iii. 15

This first prediction may serve to point out something of the general aim and design of all the rest. At the least, it opens to us one comprehensive subject, in which the whole human race is concerned. And since this subject was the first that introduced the revelations of prophecy, we may reasonably suppose that it was a principal one always in view, and that other predictions, when they did not specifically relate, might yet be subservient, to it, by promoting other purposes, which purposes, however, centered in the chief design. For prophecy having begun with the prospect of man's redemption, could be directed, in its subsequent course, to nothing greater. And such the fact appears, when we draw to a point the multiplied predictions of the Old Testament.

The limits and range of prophecy were as extensive at the first as they were afterward. The promise of the redemption of our race was given to Adam. This was the first promise, and the last of the prophets could not go beyond it. For man's redemption begun in the present world, and completed in heaven, is a work which extends itself to the whole duration of his existence, and runs out into the infinitude of the divine mercy. The scope of prophecy was, therefore, as large at the first as it was in later ages. No prophet, as has been intimated, ever went beyond redemption, though more precise discoveries of it were made through every subsequent age of revelation.

The limits and range of prophecy were as extensive at first as they were afterwards.

During the antediluvian period, there is no intimation, in the Mosaic narrative, of the prophetic gift. But in the New Testament, we have two distinct references to such an exercise. The first is 2 Pet. ii. 5, which speaks of Noah as a preacher of righteousness. He is not called a prophet in this passage, but merely a preacher of righteousness. The act, however, of building the ark, was clearly prophetic of the approaching deluge; and Noah doubtless accompanied his action by words, when preaching righteousness he called upon the people to repent, so that they might avert the impending wrath. The second is Jude 14, 15: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." This was the warning, uttered by prophecy, of the coming catastrophe, which swept the sinners of the antediluvian world from the earth; and it is a warning against all the ungodly that a similar doom awaits them, unless they repent.

Other antediluvian prophecies.

The first general execution of God's general judgment upon sin was the Flood, which formed an epoch dividing the old world and the new. So great a crisis of the world's history was not permitted to pass without the intervening warnings of prophecy. To the one righteous man and his family the deluge was foretold. The ark itself was a visible prophetic warning to a wicked world.

The prophecy delivered to Noah, after the Flood, had reference to that overwhelming catastrophe. The occurrence of a heavy rain would naturally produce in the minds of men the fear of a second Deluge. To relieve them from any such apprehension, and to assure them of an orderly succession and return of the seasons, God graciously promised to Noah, that "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter shall not cease." With this promise is connected a second grant to man of dominion over the creatures and over the earth. To confirm this promise God set his "bow in the cloud," that it should

Prophecy delivered to Noah, immediately after the Flood.

1 Hengstenberg's *Christology of the Old Testament*, The Protevangelium, vol. i. p. 4. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1858.

"be a token of a covenant," that "neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth." Thus prophecy reflected its light from the bow that spanned the earth, after the waters had retired from its surface, and gave to man the assurance of natural mercies and blessings (Gen. viii. 22; ix. 2, 9–17).

Prediction of Noah concerning his sons. Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27.

"And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." This passage contains a curse upon Canaan, and a blessing upon Shem and Japheth. Both the curse and the blessing, as the tenor of the prophecy clearly shows, are not to be restricted to the individuals named, but extend to their posterity. Just as in the subsequent prophecies concerning Ishmael, Jacob, Esau, and the twelve patriarchs, we look for the fulfillment among their descendants, so in the present instance we must look for it among the tribes and nations that sprang from these three sons of Noah.

This prophecy announces a high degree of prosperity to Shem and Japheth. The nature of this prosperity is indicated, in regard to Shem, in two ways: (1.) God is not called by the name Elohim, expressive of his general relation to the world, but by the name Jehovah, which refers to his revelation and to his institutions for man's redemption. (2.) Jehovah is styled the "God of Shem." Both imply that God would sustain to the posterity of Shem a relation entirely peculiar, favor them with revelations of his will, and make them partakers of his temporal and spiritual blessings.[1]

The blessing pronounced upon Japheth (ver. 27), is differently understood by interpreters. The verb rendered "enlarge," forms a paronomasia with the proper name Japheth, and means: *to persuade, to entice, to allure.* Hence some interpreters (see Calvin on the passage) translate it thus: "Alliciat Deus Japhetum, ut habitet in tentoriis Semi." Other interpreters give to the word פָּתָה the meaning, *to be broad,* and understand it in the sense that God shall give Japheth a numerous posterity, who shall possess widely extended territories. This is the interpretation of most of the ancient versions, and is the one most generally received. The accomplishment of this prediction has been pointed out in the fact, that the descendants of Japheth have not only gained possession of all Europe, but also of a large portion of Asia.

Another difference of opinion has arisen in regard to the subject of the verb וְיִשְׁכֹּן. According to a very ancient interpretation אֱלֹהִים is to be supplied. The verse will then read: "God shall enlarge Japheth and shall dwell in the tents of Shem." This would intimate that, while God would enlarge Japheth, He would manifest himself in a peculiar manner to Shem. Taking this view of it, the prediction would be fulfilled, when the Shekinah (derived from the verb, in this verse, rendered "*shall dwell*"), the visible symbol of the divine glory, dwelt in the Tabernacle, afterward in the Temple, and finally in the highest sense, when "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). This view, however, for exegetical reasons, has been rejected by the ablest critics, and Japheth is made the subject of the verb "*shall dwell.*"[2]

Some, who take Japheth to be the subject, regard שֵׁם not as a proper name, but as an appellation — *name, illustrious name, renown.* "May God give to Japheth an extended country, may he dwell in renowned habitations." Gesenius adopts this view in his Hebrew Lexicon. (See Ges., *Heb. Lex.*, s. v. שֵׁם.) But, Hengstenberg remarks, "It is in the highest degree unnatural to suppose that שֵׁם is here suddenly employed in a totally different meaning from that which it has in the verse before, and no one would resort to such an interpretation except from extreme necessity."[3]

Call of Abraham and

Abraham came originally from Ur of the Chaldees. When he was seventy-five years old, the Lord said unto him: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make

1 Hengstenberg's *Christology* on Gen. ix. 18–27, vol. i. pp. 20–28. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1858.
2 *Ibid*, vol. i. pp. 31–33.
3 *Ibid*, vol. i. p. 32.

of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. . . . . . And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. xii. 1–7).

prophecy connected with it.

In these promises, prophecy begins to make its larger revelations of the objects of faith. Two predictions are here made to him and repeated in Gen. xiii. 14–17; xv. 1–7, 13–16; xvii. 1–8; xxii. 15–18. One of these relates to the possession of the land of Canaan by his posterity; and the other, to the universal blessing of mankind in him, and (xxii. 18) in his seed.

This mixed subject requires distinct notice, since we have here the first point of union in prophecy of the Jewish and Christian dispensations; and since from this era prophecy takes up and preserves a twofold character related to both. The possession of the land of Canaan by Abraham's descendants identifies itself with the organization of the Hebrew people into a nation. It therefore leads us into that dispensation which includes the Law of Moses and the Theocracy, under which were transmitted the divine promises and revelations down to the era of the Gospel. This is the part of the divine economy resting on the promise of the land of Canaan. The universal blessing of the human race is the original promise made to our first parents. It is repeated and confirmed to Abraham, with the provision that the blessing of "all the nations of the earth" should spring from his seed. Through the medium of this promise, and perhaps in other ways, Abraham saw the Saviour's day and was glad (John viii. 56).

The promise made to Abraham confirmed to Isaac and Jacob.

Ishmael and Esau were the subjects of prophecy; but as they are not in the line of the inheritance, and of "the seed," it is unnecessary to say anything more than barely to mention the fact. The case of Isaac and Jacob is different. They are in the line of the promise, and form distinct links in the chain of its fulfillment. The promises made to Abraham were repeated and confirmed to them (Gen. xxvi. 2–5; xxviii. 13–15; xlvi. 2–4). The prophecy (xlvi. 2–4) in part repeats, in part fills up the one given to Abraham (xv. 13, 14). The addition made in the prophecy to Jacob is to show that Egypt was to be the land of the last intermediate abode and increase of his race, — a particular, which had not been specified before, but was now supplied at the time, when Jacob was invited by Joseph to go down to Egypt, during the famine. This was an important crisis in the history of his family, and required the interposition of prophecy to calm his fears and explain to him the end that God had in view in the circumstances that induced him to remove from Canaan to the land of the Nile.

Prophecy of Jacob on his death-bed.

Omitting the prophecy of Jacob respecting the sons of Joseph, we enter upon the consideration of that, delivered on his death-bed, concerning his own sons. He predicted to them distinctly some striking points in the future condition of the twelve tribes, which were to spring from them. These points were very unlike in their kind, and comprised a variety of determinate particulars. The general scope of this prophecy, however, is that it is directed to the land of Canaan, and that it distributes the tribes in that country with a particularity of lot, under a geographical restriction, which makes it clear that Canaan is the field of the prophecy, even if the explanation were not subjoined: "Behold, I die; but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers" (Gen. xlviii. 21).

A very remarkable feature of this prophecy is, that it foretold that his twelve sons should be the founders of the same number of tribes, by a perpetuation of descendants to each. It was with reference to this fact that the inheritance of the land of Canaan was apportioned to them. That such a disposition of the inheritance should take effect, in all its particulars, would seem very improbable to any one viewing the matter from the contingency of a continued male offspring to each of the sons, in a numerous and distant issue. But the grant was from Him, who divided to the nations their inheritance, and who, when He separated the sons of Adam, set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel (Deut. xxxii. 8). Prophecy declared his purpose.

The time of this prophecy is worthy of notice. The aged patriarch, under the divine command, had settled, with his family, in Egypt. The land of Goshen had been given to them for their use. The "new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph," had not yet appeared. Joseph was still governor of the land, and the prospects of his brethren

were more flattering than they could have been in the land of Canaan. Lest, therefore, the antecedent predictions in regard to Canaan should be forgotten by their abode and domestication in a foreign country, the most specific disclosure is made to them as to their subsequent enjoyment and partition of their inheritance, which had been originally assured to their fathers. This was the third time that the promise of their return from Egypt was given; and their minds were now turned more distinctly and forcibly to the object of God's promise, by the distribution of Canaan among the twelve tribes, that were to spring from the twelve sons of Israel.

Much has been written concerning that portion of this prophecy, which relates to Judah. The critical investigation of it does not fall in with our present purpose. It contains a prominent revelation of two things: first, the prolonged duration of power in the tribe of Judah, as distinguished from the rest; second, the cessation of that power on the coming of Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people should be. The meaning of the prophecy, says Hengstenberg, "is, that the tribe of Judah should not lose the dominion until he attain to its highest realization by Shiloh who should be descended from him, and to whom all the nations of the earth should render obedience."[1]

There is a singular fitness in the union of this Messianic prediction with the other branches of the dying patriarch's prophecy. For his prophecy is the first place in Scripture, which exhibits or implies the constitution of the twelve tribes, under which their state was afterward to be moulded and governed. As soon as prophecy recognized this division and arrangement of the tribes, it set its mark upon that tribe, which was destined to have the preëminence over the others, and the privilege of a nearer union with the advent of Christ. When the form of tribes began to be seen, the Christian subject, in relation to those tribes, is immediately introduced. It was joined with the first general promise of Canaan; it was joined with the partition of that land, and specifically with the tribal constitution.

Patriarchal prophecy a preparation for the covenant of Canaan.

Patriarchal prophecy was a preparation for the covenant of Canaan. And because it was so, there is on that account a great analogy seen to subsist in the distribution of the light of prophecy, and the succession of the Mosaic and Christian covenants. Patriarchal prophecy sustains very much the same relation to the former, that later prophecy does to the latter. Not only is the promise of Canaan in patriarchal prophecy most explicit; but the years are numbered to the beginning of the possession of it. Four hundred years were foretold to Abraham (Gen. xv. 13). A definite time was likewise foretold to Daniel (Dan. ix. 24, 25, 26, 27), The varied predictions of patriarchal prophecy tend to Canaan, as the predictions of later prophecy centre in the Gospel. This general analogy, which obtains in the structure of prophecy, in its two principal periods, — the one preceding the Law, the other subsequent to it, — may contribute to fix our judgment, in each case, of its use, and to illustrate the accordance and harmony in its most essential features.

A difference.

There is, however, a great difference in the prophecies of these two periods. Before the Law prophecy says nothing of Moses, the Jewish legislator, and the mediator of the covenant of Canaan. After the Law, when the people of Israel were in possession of the land promised to their fathers, prophecy abounds with predictions, not only of the Gospel covenant, but also of the Messiah. His person, his nature, his work, and his character. This distinction is due to Him, who is Lord of all. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant; but Christ as a Son over his own house" (Heb. iii. 5, 6).[2]

Prophecy contemporary with the promulgation of the Law.

The deliverance from Egypt was the step, in God's providence, preparatory to the institution of the Law, and to the possession of Canaan connected with it; and this deliverance itself was the accomplishment of one principal part of antecedent prophecy.

The Law itself.

Depends upon the

In its relation to the past the Law depended upon the Abrahamic covenant (Gal. iii. 17–24). That covenant, as we have already seen, had a twofold character. It contained the spiritual promise of the Messiah, which was given to the Jews, as representatives of the whole human race, and as guardians of a treasure, in which all families of the earth should be blessed. This would prepare the

1 *Christology* on Gen. xlix. 8–10, vol. i. p. 62. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1858.

2 Davison *On Prophecy*, p. 70. Sixth Edition. Oxford, 1856.

Jewish nation to be the centre of the unity of all mankind. But it contained also the temporal promises subsidiary to the former, and needed in order to preserve intact the nation, through which the race of man should be educated and prepared for the coming of the Redeemer. These promises were special, given distinctly to the Jews as a nation, and, so far as they were considered in themselves, calculated to separate them from other nations of the earth. It follows that there should be in the law a corresponding duality of nature. There would be much in it that is peculiar to the Jews, local, special, and transitory; but the fundamental principles, on which it is based, must be universal, because it expresses the will of an unchanging God, and springs from relations to Him, inherent in human nature, and, therefore, perpetual and universal in their application.

Abrahamic Covenant.

The nature of this relation of the Law to the promise is clearly pointed out. The belief in God as the Redeemer of man, and the hope of his manifestation as such in the person of the Messiah, involved the belief that the spiritual power must be superior to all carnal obstructions, and that there was in man a spiritual element, which could rule his life by communion with a spirit from above. But it involved also the idea of an antagonistic power of evil, from which man was to be redeemed, existing in each individual, and existing also in the world at large. The Promise was the witness of the one truth, the Law was the declaration of the other. It was added because of transgressions. In the individual it stood between his better and his worse self; in the world, between the Jewish nation, as the witness of the spiritual promise, and the heathendom, which groaned under the power of the flesh.[1]

Relation of the Law to the Promise.

The relation of the Law to the future might be viewed under various aspects. But our object is to view it in its bearing upon the coming of our Lord and the dispensation of the Gospel. In doing this we are guided by the general principle laid down in Heb. vii. 19: "the law made nothing perfect." In its moral aspect it bore the stamp of insufficiency. It declared the authority of truth and goodness over man's will, and it took for granted the existence of a spirit in man, which could recognize that authority; but it did no more. Its presence detected the existence and the sinfulness of sin, as alien alike to God's will and man's true nature; but, at the same time, it brought out with more vehement and desperate antagonism the power of sin dwelling in man as fallen (Rom. vii. 7–25). It only showed, therefore, the need of a Saviour from sin, and of an indwelling power, which would enable man to conquer the power of evil. Hence it bore witness of its own insufficiency and led men to Christ (Gal. iii. 24).

Relation of the Law to the future.

The Law had relation to Christ in its sacrificial and ceremonial aspect also. The whole system of sacrifices was typical; and on their typical character their virtue depended. The priesthood was typical. Sacrifices declared the need of atonement; the priesthood, the possibility of mediation; and yet in themselves they did nothing to realize either. Thus again the Law led to Him, who is at once the only Mediator and true sacrifice. In this way the Law, especially in its sacrificial and ceremonial aspect, was a standing prophecy of Christ. It trained and guided men to the acceptance of the Messiah, in his threefold character of Prophet, Priest, and King; and then its work being done, it became, in the minds of all those who trusted in it, not only an incumbrance but a snare. To resist its claim to allegiance was, therefore, a matter of life and death in the days of the Apostle Paul, and, in a less degree, in subsequent ages of the church. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. x. 4).

The first prediction concerning Christ after the promulgation of the Law, was that of Balaam, which was coincident with the approach of the Israelites to Canaan. This diviner was summoned by the King of Moab to interrupt, by his curse, the progress of God's chosen people. His will to that effect was not wanting; but it was overruled. A word of true prophecy was put into his mouth, and he was constrained to bless those, whom he wished to curse. "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."

Predictions concerning Christ shortly after the promulgation of the Law. Num. xxiv. 17.

Some have sought the star and sceptre of Balaam's prophecy and professed to have found them in David. A sceptre may be found in him; but the sceptre and the star of the prophecy are probably to be found in Him, who is "the root and the offspring of David, and

1 Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Law of Moses."

the bright and morning star" (Rev. xxii. 16). The vision of the prophet's mind carried him into futurity, and perhaps the expression, "I shall see him, but not now," is expressive of something more than an ideal vision: it may be the mysterious foreboding of that real sight, which all shall have, when "He cometh with clouds and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. i. 7).

Though some deny the application of this prophecy to Christ, and think that it is completely fulfilled in David, it is only, we think, in those points, wherein the kingdom of David is typical of that of the Messiah. Men in the age of David would not be likely to find its fulfillment in him; for they found in his time other predictions opening the designs of God to a greater extent. It was a principle of ancient prophecy that it was constantly advancing, in some or other of its prospects, until the point of rest was given to so many of them, in the advent and religion of Christ.

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."

The prophet like unto Moses. Deut. xviii. 15–18.

The scope of this prophecy is decided by its origin and occasion. The Israelites could not endure the voice and fire of Mount Sinai. They asked for an intermediate messenger between God and them, who should temper the awfulness of his voice, and impart to them his will in a milder way. In answer to their prayer, God declares that they had well spoken, and that He would accordingly raise up unto them a Prophet such as they desired (Deut. xviii. 16, 17, 18).

Three general views of this passage have found their separate advocates. The first is that נָבִיא is used in a collective sense, and that it includes the prophets of all periods; the second, that it has exclusive reference to Christ; the third, that נָבִיא is used in a collective sense; but at the same time the promise is completely fulfilled only by the mission of Christ, in whom the idea of the prophetic order was completely realized.

The context (vers. 20–22) would seem to indicate that an order and succession of prophets were contemplated; but that is not inconsistent with the view, that the Prophet like unto Moses was to be some one Person, whose mission should be to reveal the divine will in a way differing from the terrors of the Law given from Mount Sinai. In this sense it is understood in the Gospel history (John v. 46, and i. 45; Luke xxiv. 44; Acts iii. 22, 23; Acts vii. 37; Matth. xvii. 5).[1] So it has been understood from the earliest times by most interpreters in the Christian Church and by the older Jews.

To justify its application to Christ the resemblance between Him and Moses has been drawn out into a variety of particulars, some of which may be regarded as fanciful. The great and essential characters of similitude between them are in the fullness and luminous intuition of their communications with God, the magnitude of the revelations made by them, and the institution of a religion founded upon these revelations.

There is another resemblance included in the scope of the prediction, resting in a quality, which began with Moses. Before his time the greater part of prophecy had been communicated in oracles and visions from God to individuals. When the patriarchs were inspired to prophesy, it was only upon the occasion; they had no constant recognized office of that nature. "A prophet raised up from among his brethren," and set forth as the declared interpreter of God's will, a living oracle of divine communication, was unknown until the mission of Moses. In this particular he resembled Christ, the Prophet of the New Testament.

Temporal prophecy concurrent with the promulgation of the Law.

The circumstances, under which the children of Israel were organized into a nation in the wilderness, are without a parallel in the history of any other nation. They were placed under the regimen of their law, obedience to which was strictly enjoined upon them. In case of disobedience, Moses, their prophet, denounced upon them, along with the dissolution of their polity, captivity. and dispersion, sufferings of unexampled severity (Deut. xxviii., xxix).

It is a striking fact in the delivery of this prophecy, that it comes from the legislator of the commonwealth. It is concurrent with the foundation of that commonwealth. It is not like man's wisdom to anticipate the downfall of his own works, at the moment when they come fresh from his hands. But it is like the wisdom of God to predict the fall of things,

[1] Some of these references affirm only that Moses wrote of Christ. The pertinency of Matthew xvii. 5 lies in the last clause, "hear ye him," compared with the last clause of Deut. xviii. 15.

which are appointed to a great change, at a time when appearances are most remote from it, and when the state of things dictates other feelings and opposite anticipations. The approaching settlement of the chosen people in Canaan, is the time when their ruin and their expulsion from that land are introduced to view. In the land of Canaan they found a domicile for their Law, and an investiture of their covenant; and then prophecy ceased for a season.

From Moses to Samuel there is an interval without prophecy; from Samuel to Malachi there is continuity of prophecy; from Malachi to Christ there is another interval without prophecy.

Cessation of prophecy between Moses and Samuel

That there was an intermission of the prophetic gift may be proved by the following arguments: —

Proofs of the intermission of the prophetic gift from Moses to Samuel.

(1.) The silence of the sacred record.

(2.) By the union of Samuel with Moses, when the prophets of God are mentioned together (Jer. xv. 1; compare Ps. xcix. 6).

(3.) By the implication of Paul, who reckons the government of the judges to Samuel, the prophet, as distinguished from them (Acts xiii. 20; compare iii. 24).

(4.) By the express statement of the historic text, which informs us that "the word of the Lord was precious in those days: there was no open vision" (1 Sam. iii. 1).

During the period of intermission, we read of Deborah, the prophetess; but her title to that name was probably due to her inspiration and to a call to government, or to her gift of composing sacred hymns. In the latter sense, Miriam, the sister of Moses, is styled a prophetess (Ex. xv. 20). The prophetic power showed itself in her under the form of poetry, accompanied with music and processions.

There was a reason for this intermission of prophecy in the condition and circumstances of the people. During the period of cessation there was no change seriously or permanently affecting the constitution of the government. The people, it is true, were subject to many vicissitudes of fortune. When they sinned, God gave them into the hands of their enemies; when they repented, He delivered them. But these vicissitudes did not shake the frame of their polity, their priesthood, or their law. They were merely the exemplifications of the issue of obedience, or disobedience. They gave no destructive shock to their institutions. No change occurred of magnitude sufficient to demand the prophetic interposition.

Reason for this intermission of prophecy.

In the time of Samuel a different state of things arose. The commonwealth wore not only a disturbed appearance, but also approached the time of great innovations. A regal government was to be set up; the priesthood was to be transferred; the kingdom was to be divided; after which idolatry was established among the ten tribes; then followed a series of calamities ending in subjugation and captivity. In the midst of these calamities the Covenant was placed under such dubious and questionable circumstances as to render prophecy highly expedient to the elucidation of passing events, and to the instruction of men in regard to the future course and result of the divine proceedings. For it was one office of prophecy to give adequate information concerning the special institutions of God's covenant, and to predict the changes to which these institutions were from time to time subjected. No ordinance of any importance was allowed to pass away without the express and definite announcement of prophecy. This is verified in regard to the gift of Canaan, the Mosaic Covenant and worship, the Hebrew people as the peculiar people of God, the temporal kingdom of David, and the Temple. All these appointments have passed away, but none of them was abolished without the distinct announcement of prophecy.

Corresponding to the disturbed state of the commonwealth of Israel and to the changes that were awaiting it, were the revival and subsequent enlargement of the prophetic revelation. Prophecy took its stand at the commencement of these changes and innovations. As Moses was the prophet of the age of the Law, so was Samuel the prophet of the first age of the monarchy of Israel.

The proper age of the prophets, or the reign of predictive prophecy dates from the time of Samuel.

From the time of Samuel, prophecy is continuous and progressive. It proceeds, without any material chasm, or suspension of its revelations, through the succeeding line of complex history, down to the days of Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, when it came to a close again for a long season, and interposed its other great cessation prior to the Gospel advent. This, then, is the reign of predictive revelation.

From the time of Samuel, prophecy is progressive and enlarged.

and the proper age of the prophets. It is the middle period of the first dispensation, standing equally removed, in time and in some of its characters, from the Law and from the Gospel; and the service of prophecy, during this period, forms a connecting link of information between the two. It was a period that had its succession of inspired messengers following each other in order from first to last; and it had its predictions embracing every remarkable change affecting the chosen people, as well as a continuation of predictive prophecy carried forward and reaching to the Gospel age. Its communications are also enlarged. It branches out in different directions. It enters into the Jewish, Christian, and Pagan subjects. The restricted Jewish subject comes first, as in the predictions of Samuel. The Jewish and the Christian are next combined, as in the prophecies of David and Isaiah. Afterward the Christian and Pagan are clearly and formally connected in the prophecies of Daniel. All these subjects, either apart or in union, are filled up from time to time with various accessions of prediction, extending on every side the range of the revelation.

One subject prominent.

In this series of predictions, one subject is prominent. It is the Christian. It is, of all others, the most frequently introduced and the most copiously treated. "To Christ give all the prophets witness." Whatever matters they may treat of, to Him and his religion they direct our attention with a remarkable concurrence and agreement. The consummation of the designs of God in his particular covenant with the house of Israel, is referred to the days of the Messiah. The succession of the kingdoms of the earth is equally deduced to the Messiah's Kingdom. It may, therefore, be truly said of prophecy and of its scope, that it presents the Redeemer and his everlasting Kingdom as its centre, and the end of the revelations of God.

Prophecy in the time of Samuel.

It has been already stated that, during the time of the Judges, the people of Israel were subject to many vicissitudes of fortune; and that, at the close of that period, the commonwealth was approaching a time of great innovations. In this crisis of the Chosen People, second only in importance to the Exodus, there appeared a leader, second only to Moses.[1] This was Samuel, to whom the Lord especially revealed Himself. He was the subject of divine communications when he was a child; and when he grew up, "all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord" (1 Sam. iii. 20). The two books which give an account of the first establishment of the monarchy are called by his name, as fitly as the books which give an account of the establishment of the theocracy are called by the name of Moses.

Samuel was not a founder of a new state of things, like Moses; but he was appointed to regulate the great change, which ensued in the choice of a king to rule over Israel. At first he remonstrated against the wishes of the people, but afterwards yielded by divine direction, and anointed Saul of the tribe of Benjamin. When Saul, for his transgression, was rejected, David, of the tribe of Judah, was anointed by the same hand to succeed to the throne.

Samuel, as judge, was the representative of the past;[2] as prophet, he was the representative of the new epoch, which was now dawning on his country. He is explicitly described as "Samuel the Prophet." "All the prophets from *Samuel and those that follow after*." "He gave them judges until *Samuel the Prophet*." The line of prophets, who followed in unbroken succession until the time of Malachi, begins with him. The prophetic institution, in its outward form, may be traced back to him. In his time we first read of a "company of prophets," corresponding to what, in modern phraseology, are called "Schools of the Prophets."

The characteristic of Samuel's prophecy was almost exclusively of a civil nature, being directed to the public state of the Commonwealth of Israel. Its chief mission was to watch over the change introduced by the establishment of the kingly government. This Samuel, in his official character as prophet, did with diligence. He anointed, counseled, and directed Saul; and then by divine authority he appointed the sceptre to David. The transference of the priesthood from the house of Eli, the other chief subject of his prophecy, is of a like kind; for it made no change in the religion of the Israelites, but only in the public ecclesiastical order of it. The distinctive character of prophecy, at this period, is, there-

1 Dean Stanley's *Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church*. Part I. p. 431. New York: Charles Scribner & Company. 1870.

2 Some intimations, in the history of his times, would lead us to infer that he did not entirely relinquish the office of judge after the accession of Saul to the throne (1 Sam. xi. 7; xiii. 8-14; xv. 13-35).

fore, its civil nature. As such it was adapted to its time, but it was something different from the prophecy of almost every other period. The predictions of Samuel, considered in their adaptation to the circumstances of the time, could not be said to have been framed under favor of these circumstances. For his predictions concerning Eli and Saul, the priesthood and the throne, were delivered in the face of their power; his favorable prediction respecting David seemed to be beyond the range of human probability. His first prophecies challenged a jealous scrutiny; his last was placed beyond the command of his influence and direction. In each case his authority, as a prophet, was strictly tried.

Now the predictions of prophecy begin to take a wider range, and to present a greater variety of matter.

Prophecy in the time of David.

After the experience of so many changes and calamities, anxiety and doubt might take possession of the mind of the Israelite, on the occasion of another change,— the accession of David to the throne. This anxiety and doubt, did they exist, were removed by the interposition of prophecy. Having foreshown the exaltation of David, and the preëminence of his tribe, it proceeded to establish his house, and complete his greatness by a promise of the kingdom in his family. The predictions to this effect are literal and clear: "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, and as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee a house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam. vii. 10–16). The eighty-ninth Psalm dilates the same prediction.

David's life and reign were not peaceful. They were full of warfare and danger. He was persecuted by Saul and obliged to seek an asylum in an enemy's land. His own son rebelled against him, and his subjects rose in insurrection. He was engaged in frequent wars with the surrounding nations. These troubles continued until he was advanced in life. He closed his career, however, in peace. But troublous as his own reign was, he had the prediction that his throne should be established, and that the reign of his son should be one of security and peace. "Behold a son shall be born unto thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about; for his name shall be called Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days" (1 Chron. xxii. 9). This son the Lord chose to build a house for his name (1 Chron. xxviii. 3–6). We have here the stipulation of peace in the reign of Solomon, and of a long stability in his succession. These were the promises made to this chosen King of Israel, and, in him, to his people.

Temporal prophecy contained in this prediction.

But the temporal is only one of its subjects. In the person of David, prophecy makes some of its greatest revelations. In him, as in Abraham, the temporal and evangelical predictions are united. His reign is a cardinal point of their union, and of the entire scheme of prophecy in what has been called its double sense. He was a prophet himself, inspired to reveal many of the Christian promises. In the prophetic psalms, the most of which are ascribed to David, the attributes of the reign and religion of the Messiah are foreshown to us. We have set before us, by the royal prophet, a King set upon the holy hill of Zion, his law, the opposition made to Him by the kings of the earth, their rage defeated, his sceptre of righteousness, his unchangeable priesthood, his divine Sonship, his death and resurrection, his dominion embracing the whole world (Psalms ii., xvi., xlv., lxxii., lxxxix., cx).

In David, as in Abraham, we find the union of temporal and spiritual prophecy.

As there is a great increase of prophetic light, during this period, subsequent prophecy often reverts to it. There is no individual, one only excepted, of whom more is said by the prophets, than of David. "The throne of David," "the sure mercies of David," are frequently mentioned in the progress of prophetic revelation; and the single person, who formed the principal theme of the divine oracles, was He, who was both the Son of David and his

Lord, to whom the glory of David's kingdom and the prophecies relating to it preëminently belong.

As the Messiah was to be born of the seed of David, according to the flesh, there was a congruity in originating some of the clearest and most remarkable prophecies concerning Him, at the time of the exaltation of the house of David; for the Messiah was to be the heir of David's throne, the King of Israel, the Ruler of the people of God. We observe the same order in the call of Abraham, and in the constitution of the tribes. When God first separated the family in which the Messiah was to be born, the seed of blessing was revealed to the founder and patriarch of that family. When the family began to divide and branch into tribes, the tribe of Judah was designated by prophecy as that from which Shiloh was to spring. When the kingdom of David is set up, the reign and power of the Messiah are brought into view. The congruity is not limited to the time of David's exaltation, for he was a typical king. The evangelical end is not only foreshown with the temporal appointment, but it is stamped upon it. In the house of David is founded a kingdom; but Christ has his kingdom, his protecting power and rule over the people of God, as truly as Solomon and other heirs of the house of David had theirs. The temporal kingdom bears some image to the other: they are two analogous subjects and fit to be combined together, as prophecy has combined them. This analogy and combination bring before us the double sense, as it has been called, of some prophecies, which is best explained by the principles of typology.

The prophecies of this period, relating to the Messiah, partake principally of the regal character; and David, the king and prophet, is made the promulgator of them; and an excellent provision was made for the expression, and to secure the memory of them in the language of poetry. They passed into the devotions, public and private, of the Church of Israel.

Prophecy in the time of Solomon.

It had been foretold that the reign of Solomon should be distinguished for its peace and tranquillity. It was also distinguished for its wealth and power (1 Kings iv. 20–26). David had subdued all the enemies of Israel; and in actual extent the boundaries of the Chosen People, in the time of Solomon, did not reach beyond the conquests of his father. He had dominion over nearly all the territory comprised in the original grant to Abraham. "The Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel" (1 Chron. xxix. 25).

The Temple.

The greatest monument of Solomon's reign was the Temple. It had been a command and a prediction that he should build this edifice in his days (1 Chron. xxii. 8–11). This glorious fane was commenced under the auspices of prophecy (2 Chron. vi. 16, 17). The royal builder, at its dedication, made mention, in the hearing of all Israel, of past and subsisting predictions, which mention, in the hearing of those who could have given a ready contradiction, in case they were false, certified that they were fulfilled and known.

The Temple itself a prophecy.

The Temple itself was a prophecy. The building of it was directed for the reason that God had given "rest to his people," and henceforth would not suffer them to wander, or be disturbed, so long as they enjoyed the privilege of being his people. "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more" (2 Sam. vii. 10). This promise of rest is connected with the Temple; for it was spoken by the prophet Nathan, when God confirmed the design of building it. A fixed sanctuary of their religion was the most appropriate pledge that they could receive of the stability of their national fortunes. It must have been a gratifying pledge to a people, who had been pilgrims in Canaan, strangers in Egypt, wanderers in the Desert, and who again, in Canaan, had sought a home for their religion, in the removals of their migratory Ark. "Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle" (2 Sam. vii. 6).

It may be said that the Temple did not have a lasting continuance. The people were carried into captivity, and the Temple was destroyed. To this it may be replied that the Temple was never designed to act as a charm to avert the divine judgments, in case of disobedience. It fell with the people and rose with them. It was the place which God had "chosen to set his name there." It was the acknowledged and authorized seat of their

worship, upon which their covenant stood. Except around that Temple the Israelites have never been able to settle themselves as a people; except in it, they have never been able to find a public home for their nation and their religion. God made it their "resting-place"; and if it exists no more, it is a proof that they have ceased to be his people. The long desolation of the Temple, and their removal from the seat of it, are, therefore, proofs that their polity and peculiar law have, in the purposes of Providence, come to an end.

The destruction of the Temple foretold to Solomon, at its dedication.

In case of disobedience, on the part of his people, God forewarned Solomon, that the Temple, which was to be a "resting-place," on condition of obedience, should be destroyed. "But if ye at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them; then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all people: And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house?" (1 Kings ix. 6–8; see also 2 Chron. vii. 19–22).

Such was the oracular communication from God to Solomon, on the completion of the sacred edifice. As Moses, the founder of the Commonwealth of Israel, was inspired to forewarn the people, at the beginning of their national existence, of their future afflictions and dispersions, so the builder of the Temple, had foreshown to him, at the time of its completion, a view of its destruction, by the avenging hand of the Almighty, as one of the special acts of his judgment against his people, in case of their disobedience and apostasy.

Prediction of the dismemberment of Solomon's kingdom.

The glorious empire of Solomon came to ruin. With all his wisdom, which has placed him above the wise of every age, he was guilty of much folly. He attained to the maximum of polygamy: his harem numbered "seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines" (1 Kings xi. 3). "His wives turned away his heart after other gods (xi. 4), and he introduced polytheism (xi. 5, 7). Thus was he led away from the paths of David, his father, "and the Lord was angry with Solomon" (xi. 9). Along with this depravation of morals and religion followed, naturally, a depravation of that just and wise policy of government, which had won for Solomon the admiration and love of his subjects. Oppressive burdens were laid upon the people, which produced discontent.

These things provoked the Lord to anger, and He "said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but I will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen" (1 Kings xi. 11–13).

Prophecy at the time of the dismemberment of the kingdom.

The glory of the kingdom of Israel ended with the peaceful and prosperous reign of Solomon. On the accession of his son, Rehoboam, ten tribes revolted and formed a separate kingdom under Jeroboam. Judah and Benjamin adhered to the house of David. This was a convulsion affecting the whole body of Israel. Their monarchy, so lately compacted, was rent in pieces; their public union, under which they had been made subjects of the divine covenant, was broken; and a cause of discord was rooted between the members of the commonwealth, which God had planted in Canaan, in a community of country and religion. Such a change would raise a question of their covenanted relation. Where did the promises of God attached to that relation rest? Did they rest with Israel? or with Judah, or with both? or were they forfeited? Prophecy answered the question. The event itself had been foretold in Solomon's reign by the prophet Ahijah (1 Kings xi. 29–39). It was also preceded by many predictions, which supplied discriminating marks of the purposes of Providence now in operation. There were Jacob's predictions of the ascendency of the tribe of Judah, and the continuance of the sceptre with it until the advent of Shiloh (Gen. xlix. 8–10). There were the recent promises of favor to the house of David (2 Sam. vii. 12–16). There was the Temple at Jerusalem, the local seat of their religion. And last of all there was the prophecy of Ahijah, which fully met the case, both in the particular form of the event, and in the reason of it. As to the event, the prediction of Ahijah limited the defection to

ten tribes, and fixed the time of it in the reign of Solomon's son. The reasons of the event were the corruptions introduced by Solomon (1 Kings xi. 33). The event was preceded, therefore, by the announcement of prophecy, sufficiently adequate to solve all questions, in regard to the transmission of the covenant.

Reply to the objection that the partition of the kingdom might have been easily foreseen by means of political circumstances.

It may be said that the partition of the kingdom might have been easily foreseen, inasmuch as the ten tribes, in the time of David, had shown a disposition to act together, and to oppose themselves to the dominion of the tribe of Judah. Consequently they might be expected, under provocation, to withdraw and form a separate government. To this it may be replied that the occasion and pretext of the revolt did not exist until after the prediction of it was delivered. It took its rise from the rigor of Rehoboam's government; but it was foretold in the reign of Solomon, and foretold with a particularity, which existing political reasons could not warrant. Moreover, though the revolt took place, on the excitement of human motives, it was established and confirmed against the current of such motives. God forbade the attempt to subdue it. "But the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, King of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house; for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the Lord, and returned from going against Jeroboam" (2 Chron. xi. 2, 3, 4).

The dismemberment of the kingdom a safeguard of the prophetic evidence.

The dismemberment of the nation became a safeguard of the prophetic evidence, by placing it under a jealous and divided care. The people of Samaria professed to receive the Pentateuch and to hold the Law of Moses. The predictions in the Pentateuch, concerning the tribe of Judah, were, therefore, subjected to their rigid scrutiny. So also the prophecies delivered against them, after the dismemberment, by prophets sent from the kingdom of Judah. A prophet of Judah was sent to prophesy against the altar erected at Bethel by Jeroboam. Had no such prophet been sent among them, it would have been easy for them to prove it. This case is somewhat similar to the safeguard furnished for the accurate transmission of the Scriptures of the Old Testament by the jealousy of Jews and Christians.

Prophecy relating to the kingdom of the ten tribes.

The moral cause of the disruption of the kingdom of Israel was idolatry (1 Kings xi. 33). Hence Jeroboam had a warning against the sin, which furnished the occasion for the establishment of his kingdom. But he was no sooner seated on the throne than, for political reasons (1 Kings xii. 26, 27), he founded a system of open idolatry; and for its preservation he appointed a priesthood, and ritual, and erected an altar (1 Kings xii. 28–33). The golden calves in Bethel and in Dan were the public monuments of this apostasy. "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," was the creed of the new kingdom (1 Kings xii. 28). The enormity of this sin was that it made idolatry the national religion, whereas, in former times, its contaminations had been surreptitiously, sometimes openly, associated with the institutions of Moses. The people readily acquiesced in the king's apostasy. Under the compact of this sin, he incorporated them in allegiance to his throne. Hence the reason of the brand affixed to his memory: "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" (1 Kings xiv. 16).

Prophecy did not remain silent in this crisis of wickedness. God sent his prophet from the land of Judah to pronounce sentence of condemnation upon the system of idolatry, which Jeroboam had established (1 Kings xiii. 1–10). This interposition of prophecy was for a sufficient cause. It was a timely remonstrance with the ten tribes in regard to the crime, which became the chief source of their growing corruption, and thereby the cause of their reprobation, misery, and ruin. The remonstrance was made on the scene of their offense, and accompanied with a miracle, which should have served as a memorial of reproof to meet the transgressor, whenever he came before the forbidden altar. But this warning prophecy was given without effect. From Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, to Hoshea, the last, there is no king excepted from the imputation of the general depravity. The whole line of kings is one of unmitigated irreligion and wickedness. King after king has this historic epitaph: "he did evil in the sight of the Lord."

A few righteous remained among the people. The prophet Elijah imagined that, like the Seraph Abdiel, he only was "faithful found among the faithless;" but God revealed

to him, that there were seven thousand in Israel, who had not bowed unto Baal (1 Kings xix. 18).

The prophecy, during this period, was adapted to the prevailing irreligion. It abounds in commination and reproof. The mission of the two great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, falls in the earlier part of this period — a mission directed chiefly to the kingdom of the ten tribes and its kings, and enforced by miracles to convince and awaken an apostate people. The duration of Elisha's ministry reaches nearly to that of Jonah; and from Jonah we enter into the series of the prophetic canon. This is the continuity of prophecy. There is also another proof of the same continuity, in the prophecy given to Jehu, during the ministry of Elisha, that his children should reign after him to the fourth generation. This prophecy does not expire until after the prophecies of Amos and Hosea have begun; and these prophets begin to foreshow the destruction of the kingdom of Israel. Consequently the series of prophecy is so far complete.

The result is that the kingdom of Israel has its entire history written in the perpetuity of its wickedness, as recorded in the ministry of its prophets. The general document is: "Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, which he did; they departed not from them; until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day" (2 Kings xvii. 21–23).

The prophecies concerning Israel furnish a melancholy contrast to those relating to Judah. The case of Israel was to be hopeless: Judah was to be restored.

Temporal prophecy relating to Judah, from the division of the kingdom in the days of Rehoboam, until the Babylonian captivity.

At the time of the disruption of the kingdom, reason could not determine, for anything that then appeared, which would be the more prosperous, or stable of the two. That of Samaria, her greater territory and numbers considered, seemed to have the advantage. But prophecy supplied data, which would assist in forming a judgment concerning their comparative stability. We have already seen that there were promises on the side of the tribe of Judah and the family of David, which may be understood, by plain inference, to negative the hopes of the other tribes. For these promises made to the tribe of Judah virtually cut off the other tribes by a speedier termination of their power.

But the question was not left to depend upon inference. It was decided positively by direct prophecy. Of the four greater and twelve minor prophets, whose books we find in the Canon of Scripture, the most ancient are Jonah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. The prophecy of Jonah relates to the city of Nineveh. Joel speaks of coming judgments upon the land, of a restoration of Judah and Jerusalem from captivity, and of blessings upon them. Hosea speaks directly to the point, as it regards the relative destiny of the two kingdoms. Speaking in the name of the Lord, he says: "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God" (Hos. i. 6, 7). The whole book of this prophet inculcates the speedier dispersion and desolation of the house of Israel. Both Israel and Judah are threatened; but the burden of his prophecy is upon Ephraim, Bethel, and Samaria. Amos wails in elegiac strains: "The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up" (Amos v. 3). Isaiah predicted that "within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people" (Is. vii. 8). Looking through his prophecies, we find predictions that Judah should be preserved. They were to fall under the power of the Assyrians; but they were to be delivered (chap. x). They were afterward to fall into the hands of the Babylonians (chap. xxxix). But a restoration was to ensue, and the restorer is mentioned by name (xliv. 28; xlv. 1). The medium of their restoration was to be the capture of Babylon (xlv. 1–3; lxvii. 1–15; comp. chap. xiii.). The Medes and the Persians were to be the powers engaged in the siege (xiii. 17; xxi. 2). The city of Jerusalem and the Temple were to be rebuilt (xliv. 28).

Evangelical prophecy from the disruption of the kingdom until the captivity in Babylon

The most cheering evangelical promises were made during the decline, and after the overthrow of the temporal kingdom. When the First Dispensation began to be shaken, the objects and promises of the second began to be substituted in its place. A new kingdom, and a new covenant are presented to view; and the blessings and mercies, which are most peculiar to the expected dispensation, are placed in a clearer light than ever before. The promises of them are also

greatly multiplied. The evangelical teaching of the prophets, during this period, was an approach to the economy of the Gospel, which abolishes the ritual law and establishes the moral. In this light, it was a preparation for the future change. It also furnished opportune instruction to the people of Israel, at a time when the ritual law was rendered difficult or impracticable. On the one hand, there was intestine trouble; on the other, foreign invasion: their heathen enemies were beginning to spoil their land; the temple was about to be destroyed, and the public institutions of their religion were soon to be suspended. In this state of affairs, it must have been consolatory to the pious men of the nation to learn from the prophets, that personal religion was that, which God most esteemed, and which He had always preferred. Thus the prophetic teaching was adapted to the difficulties of their situation.

During the first part of this period, there seems to have been a pause in evangelical prophecy. In the time of David large revelations concerning the Messiah were made; but after the disruption, prophecy was directed to the state of the two kingdoms. The two great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, were ministers of the temporal prophecy. Their mission, so far as we can gather from the records of their times, was confined to the Northern Kingdom, and it had passed before the Gospel subject appears again in view, unless some of the Psalms, of an unknown date and of a prophetic spirit, may be ascribed to this intermediate time.

The other prophets, during this period, were Jonah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Obadiah.

The book of Jonah contains no prediction of a direct Christian import. The subject of his prophecy is Nineveh. He was, however, in his own person, a type, or prophetic sign of Christ. The miracle of his deliverance from the belly of the whale was the type of Christ's resurrection (Matt. xii. 40). Moreover, the whole import of his mission partakes of the Christian character; for his preaching exemplified the divine mercy to a heathen city. It brought the Ninevites to know "a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenting Him of the evil" (Jonah iv. 2). Whether all this is to be considered a formal type of the genius of the Christian religion or not, it is certainly a real example of some of its chief properties, in the efficacy of repentance, the grant of pardon, and the communication of God's mercy to the heathen world. Viewed in this light, the book of Jonah forms a point of connection with the Gospel.

The prophet Joel foretells, in the plainest terms, the effusion of the Holy Spirit (ii. 28–32). The Apostle Peter applies this prophecy to the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 16–21).

The prophet Amos predicts the restoration of the tabernacle of David (ix. 11), which the Apostle James refers to Gospel times (Acts xv. 15, 16).

Hosea contains much of a Christian import cited by our Lord, by Matthew, and by Paul. Compare Matt. ii. 15, and Hosea xi. 1; Matt. ix. 13, and Matt. xii. 7 with Hos. vi. 6; Rom. ix. 25, 26 with Hos. ii. 23; and 1 Cor. xv. 55 with Hos. xiii. 14.

Isaiah is styled by way of eminence the evangelical prophet. His book contains the scheme of the Gospel in its grand outlines. In it we have clearly set forth the mission of Christ; his divine nature; his supernatural birth in his incarnation; his work of mercy; his kingdom of righteousness; his humiliation, sufferings, and death; his atonement for sin made by his death; the effusion of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; the universal diffusion of his religion; the blindness and incredulity of the Jews in the rejection of it; the adoption of the Gentile world into the Church; and the peace of the righteous in death (Is. vii. 14; ix. 6, 7; and all his later prophecies from chap. xl. to chap. lxvi.).

Micah foretells the birth-place of Christ; his divine nature; the promulgation of the Gospel from Mount Zion and its results; and the exaltation of Christ's kingdom over all nations (Mic. v. 2; comp. Matt. ii. 6; iv. 1–8).

The book of Nahum has no Christian prophecy, either direct or typical. It will be best understood as a continuation of, or supplement to the book of Jonah. The prophecy of both is directed against Nineveh. But that of Jonah was followed by the preservation of that city; that of Nahum, which abounds more in details, by its capture and destruction. They form connected parts of one moral history, the remission of God's judgment being illustrated by the one, the execution of it by the other.

Zephaniah predicts the restoration of Jerusalem, and the happy state of the people of God in the latter days (chap. iii. 8–20).

Jeremiah foretells the abrogation of the Mosaic law; speaks of the Ark as no more remembered; foretells the propagation of a more spiritual religion than the old; the mediatorial kingdom of the Messiah, whom he calls "Jehovah our righteousness;" describes the efficacy of his atonement; the excellence of the Gospel in giving holiness as well as pardon; the call of the Gentiles; and the final salvation of Israel. (Jer. xxx. 9; xxxi. 15; comp. Matt. ii. 17, 18; xxxii. 36–41; iii. 15–18; xxxi. 31–34; comp. Heb. viii. 8–12, and x. 16, 17; xxiii. 5, 6. There are many other passages, which perhaps refer directly to the restoration from Babylon; but they speak of it in such a way as to convey the idea that it is intended to be typical of a more glorious restoration.)

In the book of Habakkuk there are two passages, which cannot be excluded from some relation to the Gospel. The first is, "The just shall live by faith" (ii. 4), cited in Rom. i. 17 and in Heb. x. 38. Here we have a Christian principle, though the prophet probably had no particular Christian truth in view, when he uttered it. Faith — the habit of trusting in God, or in his revealed Word — is the principle of divine life; so, in every age, complete salvation has been a matter of faith rather than of sight. The other passage is chap. iii. 17, 18, which contains a confession of the prophet's own faith — a faith separated from all earthly and temporal hopes. As such it is of a pure evangelical character.

It is somewhat uncertain when Obadiah delivered his prophecy, but it was probably immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Some give it an earlier date. For our present purpose it is not important to determine the precise time. Its predictions are directed against the Edomites. But verses 17–21 evidently refer to Messianic times. The fulfillment of these verses, Keil and Delitzsch affirm, can only belong to the Gospel dispensation, "and that in such a way that it commenced with the founding of the Kingdom of Christ on the earth, advances with its extension among all nations, and will terminate in a complete fulfillment at the second coming of our Lord."

Prophecy relating to heathen nations during this period.

It is a fact to be observed that prophecy, relating to heathen states and kingdoms, becomes most copious and explicit in the time, when those states and kingdoms are most powerful. When the people of God are threatened with invasion by these heathen powers, or when they are groaning under oppression by them, then prophecy foretells the overthrow of their power and the extinction of their glory. The success of the heathen was in some measure the triumph of idolatry; for they were accustomed to ascribe the honor of their victories to their false divinities. The return of the victor was the occasion of celebrating the praise of his idol. The religion of the conquered partook of the disgrace of their defeat. Accordingly the memorials of these times of reproach and distress in Israel show how much the faith of men and the credit of true religion were assailed by the boasts of their conquerors. The cry of the oppressed Israel was: "Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?" (Ps. lxxix. and lxxx.). "Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name" (Ps. lxxiv. 18). "The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness. Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper" (Lam. i. 4, 5).

The pious Israelite, under these mournful circumstances, derived his consolation from prophecy. The nations that oppressed him, had their rise, their victories, their changes and downfall delineated on the prophetic page. The controlling providence of God was thus explained, when it was most liable to be called in question. His people were most instructed as to his ways and purposes, when their sufferings and their fears were at the greatest height. His moral government was illustrated in their own predicted afflictions, in the foretold victories of their present conquerors, and in their expected deliverance.

The great use of prophecy concerning heathen nations was in part the same as that of all other temporal prophecy, namely, to demonstrate the providence of God. The disclosure of an event before it took place would more forcibly exhibit the divine direction of things than an explanation of it after it had occurred; for it manifested the divine prescience, counsel, and ordination together.

Had the prophets confined their revelation to the affairs of the Hebrew people, the proof of God's providence would have been imperfect; for his overruling sovereignty, in the sphere of other kingdoms, might have remained a question. But the revelations of prophecy resolved every doubt in regard to the matter. They proclaimed his universal providence and sovereignty over all nations. "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,

whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron" (Is. xlv. 1, 2). "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation" (Dan. iv. 32–34).

The state of religion, in the heathen world, rendered this exercise of prophecy expedient. For one of the most prevalent notions of false religion was that of local and tutelary deities. Polytheism set up its gods over particular regions, or kingdoms, within which it circumscribed their power. Under such an idea, the God of Israel might have appeared the deity of one place, or people. Hence the expediency of declaring his universal sovereignty.

There was, moreover, in the heathen world, a universal reverence paid to oracles, or systems of divination. These had their origin in the natural desire of seeing into futurity, which may sometimes have been abused by the craft of policy, and which of itself degenerated into the superstitions of augury, necromancy, and other forms of delusion. To the Israelite all these modes of exploring futurity were forbidden, as the devices of heathenism (Deut. xviii. 14; Lev. xix. 31). But the prohibition was made reasonable by the genuine gift of prophecy, which showed the omniscience of God in the affairs of those countries, in which the oracles of superstition were consulted. "For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do" (Deut. xviii. 14). This was the practice of the ancient Canaanites. The Egyptians and the Chaldæans, in a later age, infused more of the mystery of pretended science into the same kind of superstition. But the inspired prophets of Israel furnished the antidote and the refutation of all this science, when they could contrast with its falsehood the truth of their own predictions. "Thus saith the Lord, that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad, that turneth wise men backward, that maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers" (Is. xliv. 25, 26). By this test God vindicated his own foreknowledge, and put the pretenses of human skill, and of idol oracles to confusion.

Prophecy relating to the heathen nations commenced at a very early period. The remote judgment of God upon Egypt was revealed to Abraham (Gen. xv. 14); he had an intimation that it would fall upon the Amorites; and he witnessed the nearer judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah. These were nations placed within his view and connected with the future state of his family, the Hebrew people. The revelation, thus opened to Abraham, continued, in subsequent times, to hold the same order; for the temporal prophecy continued to embrace the Hebrew Church and nation, and other states and kingdoms, so far as the people of Israel were affected by them, or could see the tenor of God's providence illustrated in their history. "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" (Gen. xviii. 17), is the introduction to the prophecy which revealed to the Father of the faithful the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah. "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos iii. 7). This is the range of prophecy concerning his own people. "I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. i. 5). This is the mission of Jeremiah at the time when prophecy took its largest scope among the kingdoms of the earth, and when God's government and providence were to be most conspicuously displayed in their rise and fall, their conquests and desolations. In the time of Moses the like union of prophecy concerning the heathen nations with that concerning Israel may be observed; and thoughout the principal age of prophecy from Samuel to Malachi, the connection is constantly maintained. There is then a general consistency in the prophetic system, in this particular of it; and the analogy begins in the revelation to Abraham, to whom was exemplified the entire scheme of prophecy, in its simplest form, in all its parts, Christian, Jewish, and Gentile.

The principal heathen nations that were made the subject of prophecy were the Egyptians,[1] Edomites,[2] Moabites,[3] Ammonites,[4] Philistines,[5] Tyrians,[6] Assyrians,[7] Babylonians,[8] Persians,[9] Greeks,[10] and Romans.[11] The predictions against these nations were mostly given amidst the decays of the Jewish covenant, and were intended to rebuke the pride of the

1 Ezek. xxix. 14, 15. 2 Jer. xlix. 3 Jer. xlviii. 4 Ezek. xxv. 2-10. 5 Ezek. xxv. 15-17. 6 Is. xxiii. 7 Is. xxx. 27-33. Nahum. 8 Is. xxi. 1-10; xlvii. 9 Jer. xlix. 34-39; Dan. ii., vii. 10 Dan. ii., vii. 11 Dan. ii., vii.

nations, to administer consolation and instruction, and above all to lead the thoughts of men to that Kingdom which cannot be moved. In the midst of the captivity Daniel saw in symbol the character and overthrow of the great monarchies of the earth, and in vision he beheld the Ancient of days ascend the throne of universal dominion.

Prophecy during the captivity in Babylon.

The captivity in Babylon, as we have already seen, had been foretold. It was, therefore, a fulfillment of preëxisting prophecy. It was a severe and remarkable dispensation of Providence. In former times the people of Israel had suffered great calamities. They had often been brought under the power of their enemies; the ark, the symbol of God's presence, had been carried, for a short time, into the land of the Philistines. But the captivity was the severest blow that had hitherto befallen them. Their land was laid waste; their ark was destroyed; their temple was burned to the ground; and Jerusalem was reduced to ashes. "How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger! The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion; He hath stretched out a line, He hath not withdrawn his hand from destroying; therefore He made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together. Her gates are sunk into the ground; He hath destroyed and broken her bars; her king and her princes are among the Gentiles; the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord" (Lam. ii. 1, 8, 9).

Prophets during the captivity.

The prophets, during the captivity, were Jeremiah, only in part, Ezekiel and Daniel. The prophecies of Jeremiah have already been mentioned; and it is not necessary to refer to them again. He was allowed his choice either to go to Babylon, where he would doubtless have been held in honor at the royal court, or to remain with his own people. He chose the latter. Subsequently he endeavored to persuade the leaders of the people not to go to Egypt, but to remain in the land, assuring them, by a divine message, that if they did so, God would build them up. The people refused to obey, and went to Egypt, taking Jeremiah and Baruch with them (Jer. xliii. 6). In Egypt he still sought to turn the people to the Lord (xliv.); but his writings give no information respecting his subsequent history. It is asserted that the Jews, offended by his faithful remonstrances, put him to death in Egypt: Jerome says at Tahpanhes.

Temporal prophecy during the captivity both Jewish and Pagan.

The duration of the captivity was foretold by Jeremiah (Jer. xxv. 11, 12. Compare Dan. ix. 2). Seventy years were to be accomplished in the desolations of Jerusalem. Ezekiel, who, like Jeremiah, was a priest as well as a prophet, was carried away captive eleven years before its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar. When he was among the captives by the river Chebar, "the heavens were opened and he saw visions of God" (chap. i. 1).

The predictions of Ezekiel were delivered partly before and partly after the destruction of Jerusalem, which calamitous event forms their central point. Before this sad calamity his chief object was to call to repentance those who were living in careless security; to warn them against indulging the hope that, by the help of the Egyptians, the Babylonian yoke would be shaken off (chap. xvii. 15–17); and to assure them that the destruction of their city was inevitable and fast approaching. After the destruction of the city his principal care was to console the exiled Jews by promises of future deliverance and restoration to their own land.

The predictions of Ezekiel are remarkably varied. He has instances of visions,

> —— "When, by the vision led,
> His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
> Of alienated Judah;" [1]

(chaps. viii.–xi.); symbolical actions (iv. 8); similitudes (chaps. xii., xv.); parables (xvii.); proverbs (xii. 22; xviii. 1 ff.); poems (xix.); allegories (chaps. xxiii., xxiv.); open prophecies (chaps. vi., vii., xx., etc.).

In his predictions against the heathen nations, he confines the number of these nations to seven. This was probably intentional on the part of the prophet, otherwise we would scarcely find Sidon separately brought forward alongside of Tyre, xxviii. 20 ff. (Ewald, p. 307; Hitzig, p. 187.) Also the order in which these prophecies stand connected, deviating as it does from chronological sequence, has a deeper foundation in the subject-matter. "First

1 Milton, *Paradise Lost*, book i., lines 455-457.

the judgment is predicted against the neighboring nations, Ammon, xxv. 1–7; Moab, vers. 8–11; Edom, vers. 12–14; and the Philistines, vers. 15–17; these rising up in open enmity to the theocracy, represent in this the might of heathendom, as it has turned away from God, and is arrested in the very act of rebellion against Him." Then follow the prophecies against Tyre and Sidon (xxvi.–xxviii.). "In Tyre is represented the image of vain-glory, and of fleshly security, which looks away from God, and thus plunges ever deeper into the sinfulness and inanity of the natural life." "Finally, both of these sides meet together in Egypt (xxix.–xxxii.), that ancient enemy of the covenant people, now strengthened so as to become one of the empires of the world, and as such taking its stand in unbending defiance and vain-glory; yet now, like all the rest, on the point of being hurled down into an abyss from the summit of its ancient splendor" (Häv., *Comm.*, p. 405).

The position of the prophecies against the foreign nations, in the middle between the threatening predictions before Jerusalem was destroyed and the announcements of salvation after this catastrophe, is due to the internal bond of connection, which is real and causal. It is brought about by means of the following thought: "Though the covenant people fall under the heathenish worldly power, still this is not a victory of heathenism over the true theocracy. Far from this, heathenism, with all its might and glory, must fall; and on the other hand the theocracy shall rise again from its ruins to new life in glory." (Comp. Häv., *Comm.*, p. 404.)[1]

"The book of Daniel bears the same relation to the Old Testament, and especially to the prophets, as the Revelation of John to the New, and especially to the prophetic sayings of Christ and his Apostles. Daniel is the Apocalypse of the Old Testament. Other books of the Old Testament as well speak of the great Messianic future; other books of the New Testament as well speak of the second coming, or Parousia of Christ. But, while the other prophets bring only the particular situation of the people of God at the time into the light of prophecy, and while the Apostles give disclosures on special eschatological points, as the wants and necessities of their readers demand them; Daniel and the Revelation of St. John are not so much called forth by a temporary want, and given for a special end, but they have the more general aim of serving as prophetic lamps to the congregation of God in those times, in which there is no revelation, and in which the Church is given into the hands of the Gentiles (καιροὶ ἐθνῶν, Luke xxi. 24). We have thus recognized Daniel as the light which was sent for the comfort of those who were "wise," to lighten the darkness of the half millennium, from the Captivity till Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. And, in like manner, the Apocalypse of John was given to the saints of the new covenant, as a guiding star, to lead them on their pilgrim's journey through the world, from the first coming of Christ, or rather, from the destruction of Jerusalem till his second coming, when He shall establish the Kingdom of glory (comp. Tit. ii. 11–13; Rev. i. 7; xxii. 17, 20). The last days indeed form also the subject of Daniel's visions (chaps. ii. and vii.), and therefore we must necessarily expect an intimate connection between these chapters and the Apocalypse. But, while Daniel writes for Jews, and from the Old Testament stand-point, John, standing on New Testament ground, writes for Gentile Christians, a difference rich in consequences.

"Such being the object for which the Apocalyptic books were given, it will easily be seen why there is, strictly speaking, only one Apocalypse in each Testament, though there are many prophets in the Old, and many prophetical disclosures in the New. There are two great periods of revelation, that of the Old and that of the New Testament. And each of these is followed by a period without revelation; that which succeeded the exile, and that which succeeded the Apostles (the Church-historical period). The Apocalyptic books are the two lights which shine out of the former periods into the latter. And hence, each Apocalypse is among the latest works of its respective Canon; it is written at a time when revelation, about to lapse into silence, gathers once more its whole strength into a final effort. We are taught this by the very name Apocalyptic. It is from ἀποκάλυψις (Rev. i. 1), a revelation in a peculiar emphatic sense, needed for the times without revelation; a guiding-star in the times of the Gentiles."[2]

At the very beginning of the book of Daniel we find the opposition between Israel and the heathen world-power, and more particularly that power in the stage of its development,

1 *Introduction to the Old Testament.* Keil, vol. i., pp. 360, 361. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869.
2 *The Prophecies of Daniel*, pp. 70, 71. By Carl August Auberlen. Andover: Published by W. F. Draper, 1857.

which commences with the Babylonian exile, which forms the historical basis of Daniel's prophecies. The book opens with a statement of the beginning of the captivity (i. 1, 2); and mentions (ix. 2) its termination.

"The new revelation which the people of God required for the period beginning with the Babylonian captivity, was to teach them how to regard the powers of the world which they were to obey; to teach them their nature and purpose, and then to show them the relation in which the work of salvation which was to begin in Israel, stood to them. A new subject was thus given to prophecy, which, in the nature of things, could not have been given before the captivity, but which now forced itself, as it were, by an internal necessity."[1]

Chap. ii. contains an emblematic representation of the kingdoms which form the chief subject of the book. The image, which Nebuchadnezzar saw, represents the Babylonian monarchy under his own dynasty, the Medo-Persian empire, the Grecian, and the Roman. The last is divided into ten kingdoms, and gives way to the kingdom of the Messiah, represented by a stone cut out without hands, which became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. In later chapters, one or other of these kingdoms again and again appears.

In chap. vii. the first four of these kingdoms are represented by beasts, all highly significant. So they appeared to Daniel, whose eye was spiritualized. Of the ten kingdoms into which the fourth is divided, three are subdued by a little horn (ver. 8). The power represented by the little horn exercises its tyranny until the triumph of the saints. This view of the four empires has special reference to their religious connections, as the former view had to their political.

Chapters viii., x., xi. contain prophecies concerning the Medo-Persian and Grecian empires.

From this brief outline of the temporal prophecy of the book of Daniel, it will be seen that it throws a prophetic light over the whole future. The great world-powers pass away, and the scene closes with the universal establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah.

The book of Ezekiel is not directly quoted in the New Testament; but in the Apocalypse there are many allusions and parallels to its closing chapters (xl.–xlviii.), which contain symbolical representations of the Messianic times. Other portions of his prophecies, of a general Messianic character, are chap. xxxiv. 11–19; and chaps. xxxvi.–xxxix.

Messianic prophecy during the Captivity.

Daniel foretells the coming of the Messiah, the atoning power of his sufferings (ix. 24–27), and the universal dominion, which is to be given to Him over all the kingdoms of the world (chaps. ii. and vii.). In this apocalyptic book the kingdom of God takes, in the person of the Son of Man, the place of the kingdom of the world.

The Son of Man, in Daniel, is not the people of Israel, as some expositors have affirmed, but the Messiah. This is evident from the fact that He comes with the clouds of heaven, which cannot very well be predicated of the people of Israel. Again, the saints are mentioned in the vision (ver. 21); if then they are introduced in person, they cannot be represented by the Son of Man. The expression Son of Man must, therefore, be taken to designate the Messiah, and to designate his people only secondarily, and as represented by Him (comp. Gal. iii. 16–28; 1 Cor. xii. 12).

"It is quite in keeping," says Auberlen, "with the universal horizon of Daniel's prophecy, that Messiah is not designated as the son of David, but in general, as the Son of Man; no more as King of Israel only, but as king of the world. The prophetic horizon has returned to its original extent, as it was in the Protevangel in Paradise. There, as now again here, all mankind — humanity — was within the field of prophecy."

This brings us "to view the picture of the Messiah presented by Daniel, in its relation to the prophecy, which immediately precedes it. From the view we have already given of the history of Israel, it will appear to the careful reader that, in the development of the Old Testament Theocracy, the Babylonian captivity is the exact counterpart to the epoch of David. This one epoch is the culminating point of the glorious exaltation of the people of the covenant, the other of their deepest humiliation. Hence the types with which the kingdom of David has furnished Messianic prophecy, disappeared at the time of the exile, which substituted others in their place. These types are twofold, as would be expected from the nature of the case. On the one hand, the sufferings of the people are reflected in the picture of the suffering Messiah; and this is the basis of the prophecy of the servant of Jeho-

1 *The Prophecies of Daniel*, p. 20. By Carl August Auberlen. Andover: Published by W. F. Draper. 1857.

vah, which Isaiah beheld in his visions (xl.–lxvi.). To this class, also, the ninth chapter of our book belongs. On the other hand, in this very time of suffering, the truth that in the kingdom of God the cross is the only way to glory, shines forth more brightly than ever before, and there is a lively hope that after "the scattering of the power of the holy people" is accomplished (Dan. xii. 7), the kingdom of God will be set up among men with a power and extensiveness previously unknown. This is the prophetic vision of the Son of Man (Dan. vii.). All these expressions are equally significant. Servant of God denotes zealous and patient obedience to God: Son of Man refers to the ground on which man is to obtain again that original destiny and dignity as head of creation, which was conferred upon him (Gen. i. 26–28.) Both designations of the Messiah have taken the place of the Davidic type. The Messiah is no longer represented as the Theocratic King coming to the covenant people, but He appears a centre of unity both for the covenant people and the Gentile world. We see here a similar progress to that which took place in the times of the Apostles from Judaism to Christianity. It will be easily seen that this progress is intimately connected with the historical position of the people during the captivity. Even in the picture of the Messiah during the Davidic period, the two sides of suffering and victory begin to appear prominently. The Messianic psalms are divided into psalms of humiliation and of triumph. And what we here see in its germ, we afterwards see fully developed at the time of the captivity. On the one side the atoning power of Messiah's sufferings is disclosed (Is. liii. and Dan. ix.); on the other there is revealed that dominion of the Messiah which, in the development of universal history, is given to Him over the individual kingdoms of the world (Dan. ii. 7). Prophecy has thus gained not only in depth, but in breadth of view."[1]

Prophecy from the end of the Babylonian captivity to the time of Malachi, or to the close of the Old Testament Canon.

At the close of the seventy years' captivity (the time predicted by Jeremiah, xxv. 12 and xxix. 10), Cyrus "made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia. The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is the God), which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver and with gold, and with goods and with beasts, besides the free-will offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem" (Ezra i. 1–4; compare Isaiah xliv. 28, and xlv. 1–5).

This edict of Cyrus was founded upon the prophecy of Isaiah; but how he became acquainted with that prophecy we are not informed. He certainly was acquainted with it, for his proclamation was a public recognition of it to his empire. As such, it would draw notice to the prediction of Isaiah, and tend to spread something of the knowledge of the true God wherever it was conveyed. But however this might be, it had one certain and important use in securing the favor of succeeding kings of Persia to the Hebrew people, for the safety of their affairs, and the complete restitution of their city and temple (Ezra v. 13–17; vi. 1–15; ix. 9). To this subject and the annunciation of the Gospel the predictions of the post-exile prophets are almost entirely confined. These prophets are Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Temporal prophecy of this period.

The return of the Jewish people from Babylon, and their reëstablishment in their own land, were not beheld with favor by the Samaritans and other surrounding enemies. The rebuilding of their temple and of their walls was forcibly interrupted and delayed. The struggle affected their restoration as a Church and a people, and hazarded the exercise of their religion. But prophecy supplied the encouragement, which the conflict of their fortunes required. It did so by assurances of the repression of their enemies, and complete reëstablishment of their city, temple, and public peace.

Haggai delivers four prophetic messages (i. 1; ii. 1; x. 20), three of which are intended to reprove the Jews for neglecting the temple, and to promise that the divine favor will attend its erection. The fourth, addressed to Zerubbabel, the head and representative of the family of David, and the individual with whom the genealogy of the Messiah began after the captivity, promises the preservation of the people of God, amidst the fall and ruin of the kingdoms of the world.

1 *The Prophecies of Daniel.* By Carl August Auberlen. Andover: Published by W. F. Draper. 1857.

Zechariah, also, speaks words of comfort to encourage the hearts of his countrymen. "Thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" (Zech. i. 16, 17). "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the Lord of hosts, and I repented not: so again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not" (Zech. viii. 14, 15). Such is the scope of Haggai and Zechariah's predictions as they relate to the affairs of the Jewish people.

Along with their predictions concerning the rebuilding of the temple, the post-exile prophets introduce Messianic and evangelical prophecy. In Zechariah especially we find portrayed, in mystic vision and by typical representation, the kingdom and priesthood of Christ, the establishment of the Christian Church, and the concourse of nations resorting to the future temple. In this we have a second application of the same systematic form of prophecy, which was employed in the establishment of the temporal kingdom. The nearer subject, in each instance, supplies the prophetic ground and the prophetic images for the more remote Christian subject. In the first instance, the kingdom of Christ is delineated in connection with, and by analogy to, the actual kingdom, which was seen rising to view; in the second instance, his personal priesthood and his Church are delineated, in connection with, and by an equal analogy to, the priesthood and temple of the Hebrew Church, at the time, when that priesthood was reinstated in its functions, and that temple was rebuilt. As an example of this symbolical prediction, take Zech. vi. 10–15. The attempt of Archbishop Newcome to apply this prophecy to Zerubbabel is in vain; for Zerubbabel wore no crown, neither was he a priest upon his throne.

Messianic and evangelical prophecy during this period.

In the prophetic delineations of the future fortunes of the theocracy, in this book, the temporary and local relations of the present fall into the back-ground and the Messianic views predominate. In chapters ix.–xi., the struggle of the theocracy with the powers of the world is predicted, its victory and their subjection, by the appearing of the Messiah, and under his official authority as the Shepherd. In chapters xii.–xiv. the prophet predicts the last assaults of the powers of the world upon Jerusalem; the conversion of Israel to the Messiah, whose death had been caused by the sin of the people; the ruin of the old theocracy, the annihilation of all the foes who fight against the Lord, and the final completion and glorification of the kingdom of God.

In Haggai there are two Messianic prophecies (ii. 6, 7 and ii. 22, 23). The first promises the future glory of the second temple and the coming of the desire of all nations; the second predicts the exaltation of Zerubbabel, the offspring of David, and the overthrow of all earthly thrones.

Malachi foretells the coming of the messenger of the covenant to the temple, and the sending of Elijah, the prophet, as his forerunner (Mal. iii. 1 and iv. 5).

With Malachi terminates the prophecy of the Old Testament. His last predictions are like the earliest. They rebuke corruption and promise deliverance. They uphold the authority of the first dispensation and reveal the second.

A few words of recapitulation may contribute to the formation of a clearer view of the brief and imperfect survey of the scheme of prophecy, which has been exhibited.

The survey shows that the character of prophecy is not simple and uniform, nor its light equable; and that it was dispensed in various degrees of revelation. It shows, moreover, that the principal age of prophecy is from Samuel to Malachi; that from the Fall to the Flood, and thence to the call of Abraham, its communications were few; that in the patriarchal age they were enlarged; that, during the bondage in Egypt, they were discontinued, but renewed with the Law; that a cessation of them, during four hundred years, followed the Law, and that a cessation of equal duration preceded the Gospel.

It shows, further, that the subjects of prophecy varied. While it was all directed to one general design, in the evidence and support of religion, there was a diversity in the administration of the Spirit, in respect to that design. In Paradise, it gave the first hope of a Redeemer. After the Deluge, it established the peace of the natural world. In Abraham, it founded the double covenant of Canaan and the Gospel. In the age of the Law, it spoke of the second prophet, and foreshadowed, in types, the doctrines of the Christian dispensation. It foretold the future fate of the chosen people, who were placed under the prepara-

tory dispensation. In the time of David, it revealed, with the promise of the temporal, the kingdom of Christ. In the days of the later prophets, it foretold the changes of the Mosaic covenant, the fate of the chief pagan kingdoms, and completed the annunciation of the Messiah and his work of redemption. After the Captivity, it gave a last and more urgent information of the approaching advent of the Gospel.

Thus prophecy ended as it had begun. Its first revelations in Paradise, and its concluding predictions, in the book of Malachi, are directed to the same point.[1] That point is Christ. "To Him give all the prophets witness" (Acts x. 43). "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10).

VI.

Prophetic Style.

Each writer has a peculiar manner of expressing his thoughts, and this we call his style. The sacred writers form no exception: each one maintains his individuality. When we read Isaiah, we say this is not the style of Jeremiah, or of Ezekiel; and when we read John, we say this is not the style of Paul.

The individuality of the sacred writers is beautifully illustrated by Gaussen, in his work on Inspiration.[2] "As a skillful musician," says Mr. Gaussen, "who has to execute alone a long score, will avail himself by turns, of the funereal flute, the shepherd's pipe, the dancer's bagpipe, or the warrior's trumpet; thus the Almighty God, to proclaim to us his eternal Word, has chosen of old the instruments into which He would successively breathe the breath of his Spirit. He chose them before the foundation of the world; He separated them from their mother's womb.

Individuality of style.

"Have you visited the Cathedral of Freyburg, and listened to that wonderful organist, who, with such enchantment, draws the tears from the traveller's eyes; while he touches, one after another, his wonderful keys, and makes you hear by turns, the march of armies upon the beach, or the chanted prayer upon the lake during the tempest, or the voices of praise after it is calm? All your senses are overwhelmed, for it has all passed before you like a vivid reality. Well, thus the Eternal God, powerful in harmony, touches by turns with the fingers of his Spirit, the keys which He had chosen for the hour of his design, and for the unity of his celestial hymn. He had before Him, from eternity, all the human keys; his creating eyes embraced at a glance, this key-board of sixty centuries; and when He would make this fallen world hear the eternal counsel of its redemption and the advent of the Son of God, He laid his left hand on Enoch, the seventh from Adam, and his right hand on John, the humble and sublime prisoner of Patmos. The celestial hymn, seven hundred years before the Deluge, began with these words: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to judge the world;" but already in the thought of God and in the eternal harmony of his work, the voice of John was responding to that of Enoch, and terminating the hymn, three thousand years after him, with these words: 'Behold he cometh, and every eye shall see him, yea, those that pierced him! even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly, amen!' And during this hymn of three thousand years, the Spirit of God did not cease to breathe upon all his ambassadors; the angels stooped, says an Apostle, to contemplate its depths; the elect of God were moved, and eternal life descended into their souls."

These ambassadors did not all speak, or write alike. "It was sometimes the sublime and untutored simplicity of John; sometimes the excited, elliptical, startling, argumentative energy of Paul; sometimes the fervor and solemnity of Peter; it was the majestic poetry of Isaiah, or the lyrical poetry of David; it was the simple and majestic narrative of Moses, or the sententious and royal wisdom of Solomon; — yes, it was all that; it was Peter; it was Isaiah; it was Matthew; it was John; it was Moses; but it was God!"

But apart from the style, which is the expression of the mental and moral idiosyncrasies of the prophets, there is a style which characterizes them as prophets. This arises from the method of prophetic revelation. With the exception of Moses and Christ, intercourse with heaven was maintained by means of vision and dreams (Num. xii. 6). The distinction between these two, in general terms,

Style peculiar to the prophets as prophets.

1 Davison *On Prophecy*, pp. 253, 254.

2 *Theopneusty, or The Plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.* By S. R. L. Gaussen, pp. 64, 65, 66. New York Baker & Scribner, 1846.

seems to be this: the vision referred to what was seen; the dream, to what was spoken and heard. The prophets, while retaining their consciousness and the use of their rational powers, were raised to a spiritual sphere, where they saw the vision and heard the words of the Almighty. Such seems to be the meaning of the phrases, "I was in the Spirit and heard"; "The hand of the Lord was upon me"; "The Spirit of the Lord came upon me." When in this condition their intellectual and emotional nature was quickened. They knew by intuition, and their hearts glowed with seraphic ardor. This was "the normal state of the prophets, when they were receiving divine communications." They were in "the region of spirit as contradistinguished from that of sense and time." At the same time they retained their personal characteristics and native susceptibilities. The Holy Spirit, both "in his more peculiar, and in his more common operations upon the soul, has respect to its essential powers and properties, and adapts himself in his most special communications, not only to the general laws of thought, which regulate the workings of the human mind, but also to the various idiosyncrasies and acquired habits of particular individuals." While this is true, it is plain that communications made to men, who were elevated to the spiritual sphere, cannot have the form and dress of outward reality. They are to be separated from the things of actual life, and confined to the region, in which they were made. Bearing this in mind, we will be freed from the necessity of understanding literally the instructions given to Hosea to marry an unchaste woman, and the command to Ezekiel to lie three hundred and ninety days at a stretch on one side, and forty days upon the other (Ezek. iv. 5, 6), together with symbolical actions of a similar kind. Such typical actions were ideal and intended to present an image of the actual world in the territory of real life. Dr. Fairbairn justly remarks, that such things, "understood to be representative, and teaching actions in the purely spiritual sphere, could not, by anything of an unbecoming nature, which they might contain, "produce the pernicious effect which must have attended them, had they obtruded themselves upon the senses; they were for the mind alone to contemplate, and it would naturally do so with a respect to the moral bearing of the representation." The principle of interpretation of such typical representations is, therefore, in the words of Dr. Fairbairn, the following: "As, according to the rule, divine communications were to be made to the prophets in ecstasy or vision, so whenever we have to do merely with the record of these communications, the actions related, as well as the things seen and heard, should be understood to have occurred in the spiritual sphere of prophetic revelation; and outward reality is to be predicated of any them, only when the account given is such as to place the symbolical act in undoubted connection with the facts of history. Or it may be put thus: The actions are to be held as having taken place in the spiritual sphere alone, if they occur simply in the account of God's communications to the prophet; but in actual life, if they are found in the narration of the prophet's dealings with the people. In the one case the mere publication of the account constituted the message from God; while in the other, an embodied representation was given of it in the outward act."

Symbolical style of the prophets. Symbols from the natural world.

The depth, sublimity, and force of the prophetical writings cannot be fully comprehended without an acquaintance with the symbols employed in them. A knowledge of these symbols furnishes a key to many of the prophecies, whose treasures can only be discovered by him, who knows how to use it. Many works have been written on symbology; but perhaps much still remains in that field to reward the patient investigator.

There was a natural tendency in the prophets to adopt figurative representations of future things. The various objects of the world of nature were used for this purpose. These natural objects, known and familiar to all, were used as images of things bearing some resemblance to them in the history of God's kingdom among men. They were used, however, in their broader and more common aspects, not in a recondite sense known only to a few. They were applied, moreover, in a consistent and uniform manner. The prophets did not shift from the symbolical to the literal, without any apparent indication of change, nor from one aspect of the symbolical to another essentially different.

The history of the Old Covenant under which the prophets

"The Law," on the authority of an Apostle, "was a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things" (Heb. x. 1). It had the "shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. viii. 5). "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Col. ii. 17). These passages teach that the institutions of the Old Covenant stood in a typical relation to the institutions of the New.

lived, furnished another source of symbolical and typical representation.

When the prophets, therefore, announced the better things to come, they represented them as a fuller development of the things existing under the Old Covenant, or as a grander exemplification of the truths and principles which they embodied. Much of their imagery too was drawn from their more sensuous system of worship. This is a combination of type with prophecy, which is very natural; for as every type possesses a prophetical element, we may expect them sometimes to run into each other. In this way the typical in the past, or present, is represented, by a distinct prophetical announcement, as going to appear again in the future. For example, Hosea (viii. 13), speaking of the Lord's purpose to visit the sins of Israel with chastisement, says, "They shall return to Egypt." The old state of things should come back upon them, or the evil, which was to befall them, was to be after the type of what their forefathers had experienced under the yoke of Pharoah. Yet the new was not to be the exact repetition of the old; for, in the next chapter (ix. 3), the prophet says, "Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean things in Assyria"; and again (chapter xi. 5), "He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king." "He shall return to Egypt," and he shall not return to Egypt; in other words the Egyptian state shall come upon him.

This mode of representation is not peculiar to the prophets. We find examples of it in the classics. The Sibyl, in Virgil, when disclosing to Æneas the fortunes of himself and of his posterity in Latium, represents them as a repetition of what he had experienced in Troy.

"Non Simois tibi, nec Xanthus, nec Dorica Castra
Defuerint: alius Latio jam partus Achilles,
Natus et ipse Deâ."

Poetical style of the prophets.

We have already remarked that the prophets, when they saw their visions, were transported into an ecstatic state, and rendered capable of holding direct intercourse with heaven.

They "pass'd the flaming bounds of space and time:
The living-throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where angels tremble, while they gaze,"
They "saw."

In such an elevated spiritual and mental condition, the language of poetry became the natural vehicle of their glowing thoughts and figurative representations. The poetical diction of the prophets is, therefore, connected with their prophetical state. The ecstatical state was the source of the poetical element in prophecy.

Among the Hebrews and some other nations of antiquity, there was but one word for prophet and poet. It was thought that every prophet must be a poet, and every poet to some extent a prophet. Hence it arose that the prophetical gift was measured by the poetical, and the prophetical books were assigned to a golden, or a silver age, according to their rank as poetical compositions. But prophets and poets have distinct spheres, and different ends in view. "The distinctive characteristic of the prophetical representation lies peculiarly in this, that it is not confined to any precise mode; but as its aim rises above all kinds of human discourse, so it avails itself of all, according as they are best adapted to that aim. The poet has his definite manner, and cannot so readily change and vary it, for his immediate aim is not to work upon others; he must satisfy himself and the requirements of his own art. But the prophet will and must work upon others; nay work upon them in the most direct and impressive manner; and so for him every method and form of representation is right which carries him straightest to his end." [3]

The poetical element in prophecy was regulated by a practical aim. Hence we find in the prophetical writings the simplest narratives, the most practical addresses, and poetical descriptions in close juxtaposition. All was made subservient to the higher ends of spiritual instruction.

In addition to Prophetic Poetry, Hebrew Literature has two other kinds — Lyric and Didactic. The Lyric Poetry of the Bible consists chiefly of the effusions of pious feelings, and forms the greater portion of the Psalms. The Hebrew Didactic Poetry is mostly comprised in the book of Proverbs. The Prophetic Poetry abounds more than these in metaphors, allegories, comparisons, and copious descriptions. It excels also in imagination and in energy of diction.

1 *Æneis*, lib. vi. 88-90. 2 Gray's *Progress of Poesy*.
3 Ewald; quoted by Dr. Fairbairn, *On Prophecy*, p. 134.

The characteristic form of Hebrew Poetry is parallelism, which is divided into (1) Synonymous, in which the second line is entirely or almost a repetition of the first; (2) Antithetic, in which the second line is the converse of the first; (3) Synthetic, in which the idea contained in the first line is further developed in the second.

The observance of this parallelism in the interpretation of the prophetical and poetical books of Scripture will preserve the interpreter from errors, into which he might otherwise fall.

VII.

Schools of Prophetical Interpretation.

The symbolical character of prophecy opens an ample field for the indulgence of fancy and imagination; and some interpreters seem to look upon it as a gymnasium for the exercise of the imaginative faculty. They see things that the prophets never saw. They speak with as much assurance as if they knew not only the grand scheme of divine Providence, but also every part of its machinery. The rings, which Ezekiel saw, and which "were so high that they were dreadful, inspire no dread in the minds of such interpreters, but appear to them in their mathematical dimensions of hubs, spokes, fellies, and tire. The "terrible crystal" does not dazzle their eyes. Like Dante they describe with the accuracy of eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses. Prophecy to them is merely history written beforehand; and consequently all that it reveals of the future must be as literal as history itself.

Others go to the opposite extreme. They change the nature of prophecy, by denying that its object was to give any precise, or definite outline of the future, and regard it as the expression of men's fears or longings, as to the coming destinies of the world.

There are others, who rob prophecy altogether of its predictive character. It contains, according to their view, nothing that lies beyond the reach of human foresight. The precise and definite knowledge of the future, implying as it does a miracle, is, in their opinion, impossible.

The fundamental principle of literalism is that "Prophecy is nothing but the history of events before they come to pass." It is history anticipated, and all that it reveals of the future must be taken as literally as history itself. The great argument in behalf of this view is the exact fulfillment of many prophecies — especially of prophecies relating to the advent and history of Christ. Even here the principle fails; for Christ did not sit literally upon "the throne of his father David." The valleys were not literally exalted, nor were the mountains and hills literally made low (Is. xl. 4) before Him. It was this extreme literalism on the part of the Jewish interpreters that led to his crucifixion. It lay at the foundation of the worldly views of his disciples (Matt. xviii. 1; Mark ix. 34; Luke ix. 46; Acts i. 6).

The literalists.

Tested by the principle of this school, the first prophecy (Gen. iii. 15) would be denuded of all serious import, did it literally mean that the descendants of Eve, on the one side, would receive injuries from serpents, and that, on the other, serpents would have their heads crushed by them. Certainly something more was intended to comfort our first parents, when driven from Paradise and mourning under the curse induced by their fall.

The prophets did not expect to be understood literally, when they spoke of the future glory of the Church as consisting in the complete reëstablishment of the old economy, the erection of the temple, the enforcement of its ritual, and the concourse of all nations to its courts; for in other places they speak of a new covenant, of the abrogation of the old one as not worthy to be remembered. It must require a great stretch of credulity to adopt the literal interpretation of the concluding chapters of Ezekiel. His rebuilt temple takes, in the Apocalypse, the form of a holy city with "no temple therein." So also many things that are said of Zion and Jerusalem cannot be taken in a literal sense; for the language, while referring to the present dispensation, takes its coloring from the Old Economy, which was to vanish away. Take the last prophecy of the Old Testament (Mal. iv. 5); can any one adopt its literal interpretation, unless Elijah is yet to come?

It cannot be doubted that numerous and exact correspondences between the prophetic

delineations of Scripture and the past and present state of the world can be pointed out, and that the language of prophecy has, in many instances, been literally verified by the facts of history. Hence the popularity of those works, which have been written to show these correspondences and exact fulfillments. They have contributed to awaken a lively interest in the subject of prophecy, and have furnished an argument for the truth of the Bible, by directing attention to certain predictions, whose accomplishment cannot be denied. "But it is perfectly possible that the efforts in this direction may have somewhat overshot the proper mark; that the advantage obtained on one side may have been pushed so far as to create a disadvantage on another; that the evidence of a close and literal fulfillment of particular prophecies, by being carried beyond its due limits, may have given rise to views and expectations respecting the structure and design of prophecy in general, which are neither warrantable in themselves nor capable of being vindicated by a reference to historical results. Such indeed has proved to be the case."

Anti-literalists. One extreme begets another. Some minds are so constituted that they cannot occupy a middle ground. When they see the untenableness of one position, they choose the very opposite. It is with something of this disposition that a class of interpreters, convinced of the falsity of the principle that prophecy is history written beforehand, hold that very little, if any, is so written. They say, if prophecy is history written beforehand, it should be written as history. Instead of giving any precise, or definite outline of the future, it is regarded by them as the expression of men's fears and longings in regard to the future destinies of the world. Dr. Arnold has said: "If you put, as you may do, Christ for abstract good and Satan for abstract evil, I do not think that the notion is so startling, that they are the main and only proper subjects of prophecy, and that in all other cases the language is, in some part or other, hyperbolical; hyperbolical, I mean, and not merely figurative. Nor can I conceive how, on any other supposition, the repeated applications of the Old Testament language to our Lord, not only by others, but by himself, can be understood to be other than arbitrary."

This school of interpretation occupies less tenable ground than the literalists; for it eliminates from prophecy everything that is properly predictive. Hence there is no revelation from God to his people, in regard to the future movements of his providence in the world. Prophecy is nothing more than an expression of men's fears and longings. We would say it is rather a response from God to these fears and longings, to sustain the hope of his people in times of darkness, and to inspire confidence in the goodness and rectitude of his moral administration.

It is difficult to conceive how anticipations, fears, and longings could take so definite a form, and so detailed a character as many portions of the prophetical writings exhibit. Unexpected events, and the names of the persons who accomplished them, are foretold. The prophecies relating to Nineveh and Babylon delineate so circumstantially what befell those cities, as to exclude them from the sphere of mere anticipation, or human foresight. Dates, names, and particulars of the minutest kind belong to certain foreknowledge, not to anticipations, longings, and fears.

Neologists. The fundamental principle of the neological school is that *there cannot be distinct prophetic foresight of the distant future.* Distinct foresight of the distant future would be a miracle of knowledge, and there can be no such thing as a miracle. "The writings of the prophets," says a representative of this school, "contain nothing above the reach of the human faculties. Here are noble and spirit-stirring appeals to men's conscience, patriotism, honor, and religion; beautiful poetic descriptions, odes, hymns, expressions of faith almost beyond praise. But the mark of human infirmity is on them all, and proofs or signs of miraculous inspiration are not found in them.

The effects of such a principle upon the interpretation of the prophetical writings can be easily seen. All predictions of the future are, according to these neological interpreters, *vaticinia ex eventu;* or they relate to things which might have been easily foreseen without a special revelation. To this foregone conclusion all exegetical results must yield or be accommodated. Hence the arbitrary processes of the destructive criticism employed for the discovery of arguments, philological, historical, rhetorical, and moral against the genuineness of many passages in the prophets. It is necessary to refer only to the treatment by neologists of the later prophecies of Isaiah and the book of Daniel as exemplifications. Of course "all conclusions founded, or necessarily depending, on the false assumption" of this

school of interpreters, "must," in the words of Dr. Alexander, "go for nothing with those who do not hold it, and especially with those who are convinced that it is false." That it is false every interpreter, who receives the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures, believes.

It is admitted that there is a historical element in prophecy. So far from standing in isolation, prophecy is interwoven with sacred history. The latter is its frame-work. In the facts of history prophetical revelations take their rise and form. But it does not follow from this that one is the measure of the other. History is the occasion of prophecy; but the latter rises above the former and sheds a supernatural light upon its movements. Prophecy is the antedated history of a divine agency in the affairs of the world, an agency now veiled in clouds and moving unseen, now revealing itself in dazzling brightness. This providential history dictated by One, who is not subject to the limitations of space and time, pays very little regard, in many instances, to these necessary conditions of all human agency. A thousand years in the sight of God are as a moment. His prophet looking down the vista of time saw visions of the future as we see the stars in the firmament. The stars seem near to each other; but they are separated by billions of miles. So future events seemed near to each other, in the visions of the prophet, but in reality they are sometimes separated by millenniums. As an illustration of this it is sufficient to refer to the prophecies of Zephaniah and the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, in which our Saviour foretells the destruction of Jerusalem, and, in close connection with it, the signs of the day of judgment.

Modified literalism.

It is, moreover, well to bear in mind that the fulfillment of many prophecies is germinant. In other words they are fulfilled by installments, each installment being a pledge of that which is to follow. Such a prophecy is that of Joel (ii. 28, 29) concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It was not completely fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. It is going on fulfilling at the present time. Of course to make history the measure of such prophecies is impossible until the whole course of both history and prophecy is run.

Again, the combination of type with prophecy renders it necessary to distinguish between prophetical representations and direct historical narrative. Taking this combination into consideration, it is impossible to interpret many prophecies as anticipated history in a literal sense. "Every type was so far a prophecy, that under the form of sensible things, and by means of present outward relations, it gave promise of other things yet to come, corresponding in design, but higher and better in kind. And hence, when a prophetic word accompanied the type, or pointed to the things which it prefigured, it naturally foretold the antitypical under the aspect, or even by the name of the typical." This relation of the typical to the antitypical furnishes the key to the interpretation of many of the prophecies relating to Christ and the future glories of the Church. In these prophecies it is scarcely possible to understand David, Zion, and Jerusalem, as the David, Zion, and Jerusalem of the Old Testament, or to understand the things predicted of them as a literal reproduction of the things of the Jewish Economy. They evidently refer to things in the sphere of the antitype, prefigured in the sphere of the type; and these things differ as much from the things that prefigured them, as the antitype differs from the type. Material types of spiritual objects do not imply a material fulfillment.

It is not denied, in what has been said, that many announcements of prophecy are capable of yielding clear and specific historical results, that they have been literally fulfilled; but merely that prophecy is written like history, and that one is the measure of the other. There is a palpable reason why prophecy should not be written like history, lest the clearness of its predictions should prompt the efforts that lead to their accomplishment. In fact it has been alleged that such is the case, in regard to some prophecies written in a style closely approximating that of historical narrative. "The best form for the purposes of argument," says Dr. Chalmers, "in which a prophecy can be delivered, is to be so obscure as to leave the event, or rather its main circumstances, unintelligible before the fulfillment, and so clear as to be intelligible after it." Even in reference to some of the most historical parts of the visions of Daniel, Hengstenberg has remarked, that no one ignorant of the history, and with only this prophetical outline in his hand, could make his way to any precise and circumstantial account of the events.[1]

[1] See Fairbairn, *On Prophecy*, p. 114.

VIII.

Canon of the Prophetical Predictive Books.

Divisions of the prophetical books.

The Jews made two classes of prophetical books, one of which may be denominated *prophetical historical books;* and the other, *prophetical predictive books.* The first class contains Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings, which they styled *the earlier prophets* [נְבִיאִים רִאשׁוֹנִים]; the second class, the prophets proper, called by them *the later prophets* [נְבִיאִים אַחֲרוֹנִים]. The latter are subdivided into the *greater prophets* [נְבִיאִים גְּדוֹלִים], namely, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; and the *lesser* [נְבִיאִים קְטַנִּים], namely, in the order of our authorized version, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. These form twelve separate books in our Bibles; but they were reckoned one by the Jews, who regulated the number of the books in the Hebrew Scriptures by that of the Hebrew alphabet, which consists of twenty-two letters.

Collocation of the book of Daniel.

The book of Daniel stands, in the Hebrew Canon, among the *Kethubim*, between Esther and Ezra; in the LXX. and Vulgate, in the German and English Versions, it is placed after Ezekiel, as the fourth of the greater prophets. Its position in the Hebrew Canon seems, at first sight, remarkable. But it is supposed to be a natural consequence of the right apprehension of the different functions of the prophet and seer. Daniel had the spirit, but not the work of a prophet; and as his work was a new one, so was it carried out in a style of which the Old Testament offers no other example. His Apocalypse is as distinct from the prophetic writings as the Apocalypse of St. John from the apostolic epistles. The heathen court is to one seer what the isle of Patmos is to the other, a place of exile and isolation, where he stands alone with his God, and is not, like the prophets, active in the midst of a struggling nation.[1]

Reason of this collocation.

Formation of the Hebrew Canon.

All these books were received into the Hebrew Canon as possessing divine authority, and they are found in all the ancient catalogues. Ezra, according to tradition, collected and arranged all the sacred books, which were admitted to be inspired, previous to his time; and the work was continued by the Great Synagogue, until the Canon was closed by the admission of the book of Malachi, the last of the Hebrew prophets.

Chronological arrangement of the prophetical books.

The following table is copied, with some changes, from that of Otto Schmoller, the author of the Commentaries upon Hosea, Joel, and Amos. Other dates, in some cases, are assigned by different Commentators, whose arguments, in support of them, can be found in the special Introductions to the several books. They are all briefly exhibited in O. R. Hertwig's tables for an Introduction to the Canonical and Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament: —

1. The Pre-Assyrian Period.

Prophets.	B. C.	*Kings of Judah.*	B. C.	*Kings of Israel.*
Obadiah,	c. 890–880 ? [585]		896	9 Joram.
		5 Joram,	889	
		6 Ahaziah,	884	
		7 (Athaliah)	883	10 Jehu.
		8 Jehoash,	877	
Joel,	c. 850.		856	11 Jehoahaz.
			840	12 Jehoash.
		9 Amaziah,	838	
Jonah,	c. 825–790.		824	13 Jeroboam II.
Amos,	c. 810–783	10 Azariah,	810	
Hosea,	c. 790–725 ? [called Uzziah 2 Kings xv. 13 and 2 Chron. xxvi. 1]		783	Anarchy.
			772	14 Zachariah.
			771	15 Shallum.

1 Auberlen, *On Daniel and Revelation*, pp. 25, 26; and Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. Daniel.

2. Assyrian Period.

Prophets.	B. C.	*Kings of Judah.*	B. C.	*Kings of Israel.*
				16 Menahem.
Isaiah,	c. 760–690.		760	17 Pekahiah.
			759	18 Pekah.
Micah,	c. 758–710.	11 Jotham,	758	
		12 Ahaz,	742	
			730	19 Hoshea.
		13 Hezekiah,	727	
			722	Overthrow of the Kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians.
Nahum,	c. 680.	14 Manasseh,	696	
		15 Amon,	641	

3. Chaldæan Period.

Zephaniah,	c. 639–609.	16 Josiah,	639
		17 Jehoahaz,	609
Jeremiah,	c. 628–583.	18 Jehoiakim,	608
Habakkuk,	c. 608–590.	19 Jehoiachin,	599
Ezekiel,	c. 594–535.	20 Zedekiah,	598
Destruction of the kingdom of Judah by the Chaldæans,			588

4. Period of the Exile.

	B. C.
	588–c. 536.
Jeremiah,	c. 628–583.
Ezekiel,	c. 594–535.
Daniel,	c. 605–536.

5. Post-exile Period.

Prophets.	B. C.	*Kings of Persia.*	B. C.
Haggai,	c. 520–525.	Cyrus,	529
Zechariah,	c. 520–510.	Darius Hystaspis,	521–486.
		Artaxerxes Longimanus,	433–424.
Malachi,	c. 433–424.		

MINOR PROPHETS.

[O. R. Hertwig's Tables, page 50.]

	According to the Hebrew Text.	According to the LXX.	General Chronological Periods.	According to De Wette.	Special Chronological Periods.	According to Keil.	Special Chronological Periods.	In their relation to the two Kingdoms.
1	Hosea.	Hosea.		Joel.	800 B. C.	Obadiah	889–84 B. C. (Joram.)	Jonah, } Kingdom
2	Joel.	Amos.		Jonah.	——	Joel.	887–838. (Joash.)	Hosea, } of Israel. Amos.
3	Amos.	Micah		Amos.	790	Jonah.	824–783. (Jerob. II.)	Joel, } Kingdom
4	Obadiah.	Joel.	Assyrian Period.	Hosea.	c. 785	Amos.	810–783. (Jerob. II. and Uzziah.)	Obadiah, } of Judah until 722.
5	Jonah.	Obadiah.		Micah.	725	Hosea.	790–725. (Jerob. II. and Uzziah until Hezekiah.)	Micah.
6	Micah	Jonah.		Nahum.	710	Micah.	758–700. (Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah.)	
7	Nahum.	Nahum.		Zephaniah.	640	Nahum.	710–699. (2d half of Hezekiah's reign.)	Nahum, } Kingdom
8	Habakkuk.	Habakkuk.	Chaldæan	Habakkuk.	605	Habakkuk.	650–627. (Manasseh, or Josiah.)	Habakkuk, } of Judah,
9	Zephaniah.	Zephaniah.	Period.	Obadiah.	570	Zephaniah.	640–625. (Josiah.)	Zephaniah. } 722–588.
10	Haggai.	Haggai.	Post-exile	Haggai.	520	Haggai.	519. (In the second year of Darius Hystaspis.)	Haggai, } Judah
11	Zechariah.	Zechariah	Period.	Zechariah.	——	Zechariah.	From 519. (Darius Hystaspis.)	Zechariah, } after the
12	Malachi.	Malachi.		Malachi.	440	Malachi.	433–423. (Artaxerx. Longim.)	Malachi. } Exile.

IX.

Literature of the Greater Prophets.

See the Literature in the respective Introductions to these Prophets.

General Literature of the Minor Prophets.

The Monographic Literature is found at the end of the Introductions to the several books. In order to restore a chronological arrangement in the enumeration of the interpreters, I have, where I was able, specified the editio princeps of the work in question, and added the year of the author's death.

I. Exegesis.

Primitive Church Exegesis.

Hieronymus († 420): *Comm. in Proph. Minores;* in the Frankfort-Leipzig folio edition of 1684 ff. Vol. vi., p. 91 ff.

Theodore of Mopsuestia († 429): *Comm. in Proph. Minores;* ed. Th. a Wegnern. Berol. 1834.

Cyrillus Alexandrinus († 444): *Comm. in Prophetas Minores Græce et Lat.*, ed. J. Pontanus. Ingolst. 1607. Folio.

Theodoretus Cyrensis († 457): *Explanatio in XII. Proph. quos Minores vocant juxta interpr. LXX.* P. Gillio interprete. Lugd. 1533. (In the folio edition of his works, vol. ii., p. 1449 ff.)

Mediæval Exegesis.

Haymo († 853): *Comm. in XII. Proph. Minn.* Col. 1533. Folio.

Remigius Antissidorensis (c. 900): *Comm. in Proph. Min.* in the *Bibl. Max. Patrum*, t. xvi. p. 928 ff.

Theophylact († after 1071): *Comm. in* (5) *Min. Proph. Lat. ex interpr.* J. Loniceri. Francof. 1534. Folio.

Rupertus Tuitiensis († 1135): *Comm. in Prophetas Minores*, in *Opp.* Par. 1638. Folio. Vol. i., p. 798 ff.

Hugo de S. Caro († 1263): *Postillæ s. Breves Comm. in Proph. Min. in Univ. Biblia juxta quadruplicem sensum.* Col. 1621. Folio.

Albertus Magnus († 1280): *Comm. in Proph. Min. Opp.* Lugd. 1651. T. viii.

Nicolaus de Lyra († 1340): *Postillæ Perpetuæ,* ed. Feuardent, Dadræus, and others. Lugd. and Par. 1590. Folio.

Cornelius a Lapide († 1637): *Commentarii.* Antv. 1664. Folio.

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R. Salomon ben Isaak (Jarchi, Izchaki, Raschi, † 1105): *Comm. in Proph. Lat.*, ed. F. Breithaupt. Gotha. 1713. 4to.

R. Abraham ben Meir ibn Esra (Abenezra, † 1167). (See under Bomberg's *Rabbinical Bible.*)

R. D. Kimchi († 1230): *XII. Proph. Minn. cum Comment.* D. Kimchi a F. Vatablo emend. Par. 1539. 4to.

S. J. Norzi: מִנְחַת שַׁי, *Kritischer Commentar zum A. T.* (1626), in the Vienna edition of the Old Testament, by Ge. Holzinger, 1812 sq.

R. Lipman: *Disputatio adv. Christianos ad Explanationem XII. Prophetarum Minn. instituta.* Alt. 1644.

Bomberg's *Rabb. Bibel.* (Ven. 1518. Folio.) [Bomberg's Rabbinical Bible. This con-

tains the Targum of Jonathan and the Commentary of David Kimchi. The second edition, by Jacob Ben Chayim (Ven. 1526), has the two Masoras and the Commentary of Abenezra].

BUXTORF'S *Rabb. Bibel* (Bas. 1618). [Buxtorf's Rabbinical Bible (Basle, 1618), contains, besides the Targum, the Commentaries of Raschi, Abenezra, Kimchi, Levi Ben Gersom, and others.]

Exegesis at the Period of the Reformation.

FRANC. LAMBERT († 1530): *Comm. in Proph. Minn.* Compiled. Francf. 1579.

JO. OECOLAMPADIUS († 1531): *Adnott. in P. M.* Compiled. Gen. 1558. Folio.

COUR. PELLICANUS: *Comm. in ll.* V. T. Tig. 1532. F. V. IV. (All the prophets except Jonah and Zechariah.)

MART. LUTHER'S *Auslegungen der Propheten.* Halle. 1741. Th. vi. [Mart. Luther's Expositions of the Prophets, in the Quarto Edition of Walch. Halle. 1741. Part vi.]

VICT. STRIGEL, *Scholia in Proph. Minores.* Lips. 1561.

JO. CALVIN: *Prælectiones in Proph. Minores. Opp.* Amst. 1671. T. V. 2.

JOH. WIGAND: *Explicationes in Duodecim Proph. Min.* Francof. 1566.

JO. MERCERUS († 1570): *Comm. in Proph. 5 inter eos qui Minn. vocantur, cum Præf. Chevalerii.* Gen. 1698. 4to.

LUC. OSIANDER: *Biblia juxta Vet. seu Vulg. transl.*, etc. (ed. pr. Tub. 1573). Tub. 1597. T. ii.

JO. BRENTIUS († 1578): *Comm. in Hos., Am., Jon., Micah. Opp.* Tub. 1578. Folio. T. iv.

J. TREMELLIUS ET JUNIUS: *Biblia Sacra s. l. Can. V. T. Latini recens ex Hebræo facti brevibusque Scholii illustrati.* Francf. ad M. 1579. Folio. T. iv.

LAMB. DANÆUS: *Comm. in Proph. 12 Minn.* Gen. 1586.

NIC. SELNECCER († 1592): *Anmerkungen zu den Proph. Hosea, Joel, Micah.* Lpz. 1578. 4to. *Auslegung über Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk.* Lpz. 1567. 4to. *Ueber Jeremiah und Zephanjah.* Lpz. 1566. 4to. [Annotations on the prophets Hosea, Joel, Micah. Leipzig, 1578, 4to. Exposition of Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk. Leipzig, 1567, 4to. Jeremiah and Zephaniah. Leipzig, 1566, 4to.]

Post-Reformation Exegesis.

FRANC. RIBERA (Rom. Cath.): *Comm. in 12 P. M.* Rom. 1593. 4to.

JO. DRUSIUS († 1616): *Comm. in 12 Proph. Minores*, ed. J. Amama. Amst. 1627. 4to.

CASP. SANCTIUS (Rom. Cath.): *Comm. in P. M.* Lugd. 1621. Folio.

JOH. PISCATOR († 1625): *Comm. in Cann. ll.* V. T. Herb. 1646. Folio.

JO. TARNOVIUS († 1629): *Comm. in Pr. M. c. præf. J. B. Carpzovii.* Lips. 1688. 4to.

J. H. MENOCHIUS (Rom. Cath.): *Brevis expos. lit. sensus totius Scr. S. ex opt. autt. coll.* Coll. 1630. T. ii.

LUD. DE DIEU (1642): *Critica Sacra.* Amst. 1698. Folio.

H. GROTIUS († 1645): *Annotata ad V. T.* Par. 1644. Folio. T. ii.

JO. COCCEIUS: *Comm. in Proph. Minn.* Lugd. B. 1652. Folio.

J. TRAPP: *Exposition upon the 12 M. P.* Lond. 1654.

JOH. HUTCHESON: *Explicatio in 12 P. M.* Lond. 1657. Folio.

CRITICI SACRI: *S. Doctissimorum Virorum ad Sacra Biblia annott. et tractatus.* Lond. 1660. Folio. T. iv. Sp. 6583 ff. (With the Commentaries of Munster, Vatablus, Castalio, Clarius, Drusius, Liveleius, Grotius.)

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JOH. SCHMID: *Comm. in Proph. Minn.* Lips. 1687 ff., cum præf. Seb. Schmid.

SEB. SCHMID († 1696): *Comm. in P. M.* Lips. 1698. 4to.

JO. MARCKIUS: *Comm. in Jo. Am. Ob. Jon.* Amstelod. 1698. 4to. *In Micah, Nah., Hab., Zeph.* Amst. 1700. 4to.

A. CALMET (Rom. Cath.): *Commentaire Literal sur tous les Livres de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Tastament* (ed. pr. Par. 1707). Par. 1725. Folio.

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THE

BOOK OF HOSEA.

EXPOUNDED

BY

OTTO SCHMOLLER, PH. D.,

URACH, WÜRTEMBERG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, WITH ADDITIONS,

BY

JAMES FREDERICK McCURDY,

INSTRUCTOR IN ORIENTAL LANGUAGES, THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, PRINCETON, N. J.

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HOSEA.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *Person of the Prophet.*[1]

THE name הוֹשֵׁעַ, which occurs in ver. 2, as well as in the superscription, ver. 1, signifies *deliverance, salvation.* It was a name not uncommon among the Jews. The last monarch of the kingdom of Israel[2] furnishes another familiar instance. It was also the original name of Joshua, having been changed by Moses to יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. The LXX. write the name Ὡσηέ (for which Paul, however, in the citation from our Prophet, writes Ὡσηέ), the Vulgate *Osee*, and Luther, more conformably to the Hebrew pronunciation, *Hosea.* The Prophet's name = Deliverance, stood thus in marked contrast to the aim of his mission, — the announcement of ruin and destruction. And yet it well agreed with his vocation as a messenger of God, to return to whom would have been the only but the sure way to deliverance. So also the final "deliverance" of God's people was the grand object kept in view through all the terrors of the judgment denounced upon apostate Israel. Thus the position at the beginning of the Book of the Twelve Prophets, occupied by Hosea, was truly significant.

As to the origin of the Prophet we have no direct information. Only the name of his father, Beeri, is mentioned in the superscription. But we may be justified in seeking his home in that region which is clearly presented as the scene of his labors, namely, in the Kingdom of Israel. It is true that we have, in Amos, an instance of a prophet sent from Judah into the Kingdom of Israel, as also in the case of the prophet mentioned in 1 Kings xiii. But if Hosea also had been so commissioned, the fact would probably have been recorded as something unusual, as was done in the case of Amos. Yet prophets were not unknown in the Kingdom of Israel (*e. g.*, Jonah under Jeroboam II., 2 Kings xiv. 25, and, previously, Elisha with the school of young prophets trained by him). But the perfect familiarity with the circumstances and topography of the northern kingdom, displayed by Hosea, furnishes positive evidence that he belonged to that region (comp. chaps. v. 1; vi. 8, 9; xii. 12; xiv. 6 ff.). That, in chap. ii., he calls it directly "the land," and, in chap. vii. 5, terms its king "our king," would seem to prove, further, that he resided there, while his diction betrays an Aramaic coloring, in forms as well as in particular words. His frequent casual references to Judah do not invalidate the evidence of a northern origin. For it was impossible that a prophet of Jehovah, were he ever so much a citizen of the kingdom of Israel, should lose sight of Judah; for Judah was the kingdom of David, and it was to it alone that those promises related, which formed the sure ground of the Messianic hope, that the Lord would not cast off his people utterly and forever, but that a time was coming when they should rise gloriously from out of their desolation. The prophet could call attention all the more impressively to the strictness of the divine righteousness as displayed towards Judah; for even that nation was not to be spared, but was to be punished for its apostasy; how much less, then, should the kingdom of Israel fancy itself secure in its gross unfaithfulness to God! Finally, if the superscription, in the first line of which the period of the

1 [Compare, besides the articles on *Hosea* in the Bible Dictionaries, an ingenious and suggestive *Life of the Prophet Hosea*, by Prof. Green, of Princeton, in *Our Monthly*, Cincinnati, January and February, 1871. It is constructed mainly from hints scattered through the book itself. Dean Stanley gives an eloquent sketch of the Prophet in his *Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church*, ii. 409 f. — M.]

2 [In Engl. Vers. written *Hoshea*, to distinguish him from the Prophet. Comp. Zachariah and Zechariah, also identical in the Hebrew. — M.]

Prophet's ministry is defined according to the succession of Kings of Judah, should be adduced as proof that Hosea did not belong to the Northern Kingdom, it might be shown that this proves nothing, since it is not certain that the superscription proceeded from the Prophet himself. It may have been prefixed to his writings in the kingdom of Judah some time after their composition, and this mode of indicating his era would then have been quite natural.[1]

With regard to the circumstances of Hosea's life we know absolutely nothing. What tradition has to say upon this subject is utterly devoid of support and quite worthless.

With regard, however, to the character and disposition of the Prophet and his inner life generally, much could be gathered from his book. But this is to be gained more fully from what is unfolded in the book itself, and we shall therefore postpone our inquiry until we come to examine the subject as presented there.

There can be no doubt as to where the scene of the Prophet's labors lay. It was the more northerly of the two divided kingdoms, the Kingdom of Israel. The prophecies which he has left to us in his book are almost exclusively occupied with that kingdom, the events, religious, moral, and political which had transpired there, and the destiny which was awaiting it. Judah is, indeed, not unfrequently mentioned, partly in contrast to Israel (Ephraim), partly as being guilty of the same transgressions. In the latter relation it is named with greatest frequency in chaps. v. and vi., but afterwards only in isolated passages: viii. 14; x. 11; xii. 1. But Judah is always referred to incidentally, and in such a way that no doubt is left upon the mind, that the Prophet, though giving to Judah a prominent place, did not regard it as the sphere of his mission. The supposition that later, at least, he betook himself to the kingdom of Judah and there composed his book (Ewald), cannot be established.

If we seek for the period in which the Prophet lived and labored, we meet at once with a definite statement in the superscription (ver. 1), which defines this period as "the time of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and Jeroboam, son of Joash, king of Israel." This would assign to the active ministry of the Prophet a very long duration. "For between the death of Uzziah and the first year of Hezekiah there intervened thirty-two years. But the Israelitish king, Jeroboam II. died, at the least calculation, a considerable period before Uzziah. The interval was probably twenty-six years, although the discordant statements of the books of the Kings with regard to the relation of the Kings of Judah and Israel prevent us from assigning with certainty the precise period. Thus, according to the superscription, the ministry of Hosea must have begun long before Uzziah's death, and if we place it only a short time before the death of Jeroboam II., it must, since it reached to the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah, have been of very long duration, about sixty years." (According to the ordinary reckoning Jeroboam died B. C. 783, and Hezekiah ascended the throne in 727.) This result is calculated to excite doubts of the correctness of the superscription. We therefore seek grounds of support in the book itself. It appears to be quite certain from it that Hosea appeared before the fall of the dynasty of Jehu, which affords us the *terminus a quo*. For it is with the announcement of the destruction of this house that his book opens. "But it was only," remarks Ewald rightly, "the idolatry promoted by the house of Jehu, that was denounced; the people were still, to all appearance, great and powerful." More especially, there is as yet no allusion whatever to internal commotions, or to the subversion of the order of things in the state. We can hardly refer his first appearance to the period succeeding the death of Jeroboam II., during which the kingdom was probably in a state of anarchy for from eleven to twelve years. And if the supposition of such an interregnum should be pronounced untenable, we have still less room for Hosea's appearance after Jeroboam's death; for with his son Zachariah the house of Jehu lost the throne, thus bringing about the event threatened by the Prophet, Zachariah having retained possession only half a year. The dynasty of Jehu then actually appeared to be firmly established, but was undoubtedly being undermined internally even in the time of Jeroboam. To this period, therefore, concerning which we have a brief notice in 2 Kings xiv. 23–29, and which is there expressly spoken of as a time in which Jehovah gave help through Jeroboam, for "He had not yet declared that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven," to this period towards its conclusion, we can assign, with almost perfect confidence, the *terminus a quo* of Hosea's ministry. It is a matter of greater difficulty to fix the *termi-*

1 [For the further discussion of this question, and the reasons for doubting the correctness of the conclusion arrived at above, see the superscription as expounded in its place. — M.]

nus ad quem. We are certain, at the outset, only of this much, that Hosea labored and wrote before the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah; for it was in that year that the event transpired which he had so plainly announced, the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel, by the Assyrians. But how closely are we justified in approaching this limit? That Hosea lived during the gloomy period of the disorders occasioned by the usurpations under Zachariah, Shallum, and Menahem, described briefly in 2 Kings xv. 8–20, is a well established fact, for these events are most vividly mirrored in his discourses (see especially chap. vii.). But the Assyrians stand in the foreground with special prominence, as the power in which help was sought, and to which "gifts" were sent in time of distress, — foolishly, for it was in these actions that the Prophet discerned so clearly the sure way to destruction through Assyria. We must therefore descend at least to the reign of Menahem; for it was then that Assyria under Pul, first came in contact with Israel, Menahem paying him tribute, and thus purchasing from Assyria assistance in his efforts to maintain his kingdom.[1]

Ewald does not feel himself at liberty to seek any later period, and therefore does not go down as far as the reign of Pekah, thus excluding the period of King Uzziah in Judah. For it was under Pekah that Tiglath-Pileser, summoned by Ahaz to assist him against Pekah, who had formed an alliance with Rezin, king of Syria (2 Kings xvi. 5–9), wrested from the kingdom of Israel the northern and eastern portions of the country, more particularly Galilee and Gilead (2 Kings xv. 29). Yet of these important transactions the Prophet appears to know nothing historically, Gilead and Tabor, in his view, comprising between them the whole of the kingdom, and Gilead, so often mentioned, appearing throughout as an unconquered territory. But these grounds are not unassailable. In the first place we do not even know to what extent the conquest was carried. It may have been only a plundering expedition. It is certain that these districts stood only in the relation of tributaries to Assyria. But, especially, we do not know how long this state of subjection lasted. May we not be allowed to assume, in the absence of other information, that the later expedition of Shalmaneser against Hoshea (2 Kings xvii. 3) was occasioned by the circumstance that Hoshea had regained possession of the territory formerly subdued by Tiglath-Pileser? In that case, however, we must take into consideration the interval between the utterance of the discourses and the composition of the book. "In them, therefore, allusions might well be found to events and circumstances which at the time when the book was composed, belonged to the past" (Hengstenberg). Thus for example, Hosea might have survived the first Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-pileser, even though, in his discourses, Gilead appears to be still a component part of the kingdom, which in other passages, *e. g.*, chap. xii. 12 (11), it is not necessary to assume. For a tributary relation to Assyria and utter destruction are things entirely different. Scarcely anything then stands in the way of the attempt to bring the *terminus ad quem* down to the days of Pekah and Hoshea. On the other hand, there are many things which seem to demand such an attempt. The whole position which Assyria assumes with Hosea seems to show that what he spoke and wrote did not fall on the first contact with Assyria under Menahem, which had a comparatively favorable issue, but that Assyria had already displayed her power, so fraught with danger to Israel and causing such destruction, as was done by Tiglath-pileser in the reign of Pekah. And many indications seem to point directly to the reign of the last king Hoshea; one instance is the denunciation of the double relation, into which Israel entered simultaneously with Assyria and Egypt (chap. vii. 11; xii. 2). Ewald would refer this to two political parties. But nothing is known of any connection with Egypt under Menahem at least; and even though chap. vii. 11 could be interpreted in this interest, the expression employed in xii. 1 indicates so clearly an alliance and an offering of gifts, that we are only justified in supposing that transaction to be referred to, of which we have certain information, namely, the double game which, according to 2 Kings xvii. 3, 4, Hoshea played with Assyria and Egypt. We may obtain still clearer testimony to the correctness of this view, if, in

1 [This was the first occasion recorded in the Scriptures, and also, probably, the turning-point in the history of Israel's relations with Assyria, which terminated so disastrously to the former. If we may trust, however, the translation of the inscription upon the black obelisk brought by Layard from Nimrûd, which was erected by Shalmaneser I., we are pointed to the reign of Jehu as the period of the first contact. It is stated there that Benhadad II. and Hazael (enemies of Israel) were among the conquered foes of the great Assyrian, and that Yahua (Jehu), the son of Khumri (Omri, who must therefore have been considered the founder of the Kingdom of Samaria) paid tribute to him. In this translation all authorities concur. Sir Henry Rawlinson infers also from 2 Kings xv. 19, that Menahem "had neglected to apply for the usual confirmation of his kingdom," and that this was the cause of Pul's invasion. He draws a like inference with regard to Amaziah of Judah from 2 Kings xiv. 5. If these opinions are correct, it would appear that the countries were brought into frequent contact before the first occasion alluded to in the Old Testament. — M.]

chap. x. 14 Shalman be understood directly to stand for Shalmaneser, so that the first expedition of Shalmaneser, mentioned in 2 Kings xvii. 3, would be referred to as having already been made, and as a new invasion is here threatened, the last expedition of that king which brought ruin upon the kingdom would be regarded as impending. But the passage is obscure, and the conclusion which must be adopted is that the *terminus ad quem* can be only approximately ascertained. But, at all events, no direct testimony can be adduced against the correctness of the designation of time made in the superscription, which extends the ministry of the Prophet to the reign of Hezekiah.

Accordingly Hosea was, most probably, an older contemporary of Isaiah, whose ministry began in the long reign of King Uzziah in Judah, though much later than that of Hosea, and extended to a period much later. He would also be contemporary with Micah, if he actually lived until the beginning of Uzziah's reign. On the other side he comes in contact with Amos; for the latter prophet lived in the contemporary reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam II.; and if it was the case that Hosea did not appear until after the death of Amos, he must have been closely connected with him, not merely in time, but also in their common vocation. For it was the mission of Amos also, though belonging to the tribe of Judah, to proclaim the divine judgments upon the kingdom of Israel. Hosea, therefore, takes up the thread where Amos had let it drop and keeps spinning it out until the destruction of the kingdom. He also manifestly makes reference to Amos, comp. Hos. viii. 14 with Amos ii. 5 (i. 4–7, 10, 12; ii. 6); Hos. ix. 3 with Am. vii. 17; Hos. xii. 8 with Am. viii. 5; Hos. xii. 10 f. with Am. ii. 10 ff. While Amos is probably cognizant of the power, Assyria, by which God was to execute his judgments upon the kingdom of Israel, but does not name or even allude to it, in Hosea it is named plainly and very frequently, and he must denounce any association of Israel with this World-Power, which had approached already so near. Hosea falls, in any case, in the last of the three periods of the history of this kingdom. The times in which he lived, as defined above, form a twofold period, or two periods, outwardly at least, very diverse. One was the period of the vigorous rule of Jeroboam II. who raised the kingdom to an unprecedented position of eminence and power, although internal conditions of decay were abundantly present, which the Prophet was commissioned to prove. The other was the period of the visible decline and decay of the kingdom after the fall of the house of Jehu and under the succeeding kings, induced inwardly by a religious and moral ruin, and not deferred, but only hastened, by an untheocratic policy, which sought support among foreign powers, and delivered the nation into the hands of the Assyrians. The information given in the historical books concerning this whole period must have its due place in the study of the Prophet. Comp. 2 Kings xiv. 23–29; xv. 8–31; xvii. 1–6, and, as supplementary to it, the pragmatical treatment of the subject, assigning the causes of the destruction of the kingdom, 2 Kings xvii. 7–23. The truest picture of the whole period is presented by the Prophet himself in his whole book, to the examination of which we accordingly pass.

§ 2. *The Book of the Prophet.*

We have in the Canon under the name of Hosea one book in fourteen chapters.

With regard to its *contents.* We have seen above that it is mainly occupied with the more northerly of the two kingdoms, although the kingdom of Judah is not therefore kept out of sight, being alluded to repeatedly, especially in chaps. v. and vi., in conjunction with Israel. What then has it to say with reference to that kingdom? A single glance into our book is sufficient to inform us. It is chiefly occupied with a most severe testimony against the national apostasy from Jehovah, and the deep and prevailing moral and civil corruption which appears throughout as the fruit of that apostasy, and in immediate connection therewith, an announcement of divine judgments, which increases in severity until the utter destruction of the kingdom itself is foretold. But this does not exhaust the purport of the book; for, like the other prophetic writings, it contains too an abundant storehouse of promise. By the side of the severe threatenings, though these occupy by far the larger space in the book, there are found words of promise most richly unfolded, not merely as a hope of future conversion and thus of the return of better days, but as a definite announcement that the time was coming when the people, purified by chastisement and returning in grief and penitence to their God, should again find acceptance with Him, and that thereby their kingdom should be restored, not in its then abnormal and divided condition, but as one united body, under a King of the line of David.

But this view only presents the meaning of the book externally, and exhibits only the germs of that which it was the special province of the prophetic writings chiefly to unfold.

It is just with our Prophet that this exhibition cannot satisfy. He presents these general truths in a form peculiar to himself; he would at least, beside the one, the threatening, place the other, the promise, but he labors to regard from a single point of view the position which Jehovah bears to Israel and so specially to the kingdom of the ten tribes, and from this to explain both the threatening and the promise; to view them, namely, in the light of *Jehovah's love to Israel as his people.*

In this love of God (and not simply in his righteousness) are rooted, according to Hosea, even the threatening and announcement of punishment, with which he is chiefly occupied. For it was because Jehovah's love embraced his people from the beginning that He could not suffer any apostasy from him, but must become angry at it, must chastise it, must even slay and destroy it utterly, that is, in its corporate existence. All threatening and chastisement is really the indignation and zeal of love,[1] born of sorrow and therefore all the more intense. Hence the announcement of punishment sounds forth in tones of terrific severity. But they also have their end in themselves. Love is indeed angry and most deeply so, but it is and remains nothing but love, for it is pained that it must be angry, and with all its wrath it can only aim to remove that which interrupts and prevents the display of itself to the object beloved, and must ever aim to secure salvation, reconciliation, and restoration, else it would itself stand in the way of realizing its object, and would thus contribute most surely to its own failure. From this stand-point, promise is seen to be as necessary as threatening, and in proportion to the severity of the latter must be the richness of the former, as flowing from the love of God, and not simply from a certain compassion coexisting with his punitive righteousness, or from his faithfulness, by which the covenant is maintained, as though his truthfulness alone were to be kept unimpeachable. If, therefore, we do not wish to rest content with a superficial view of the book, we must regard its meaning from this stand-point as expressed in the following estimate: "The prophetic exhibition of the love of God, wounded sorely and in numberless ways by Israel's guilt, and therefore necessarily a chastening love, though ever remaining unchanged in its inner nature, which being so deeply grounded would not destroy, but heal and recall to itself." Such are the words of Ewald, who has so correctly perceived and so beautifully expressed the fundamental thought of our book, but who views it too subjectively, too much as the mere outflow of the author's own personal feelings, instead of something flowing from a deep insight into the nature of God himself. Yet he makes these admirable observations: "To this prophet the love of Jehovah is the deepest ground of his relation to Israel; that love was always active in forming the Church; it was injured and disturbed by Israel; it chastens now in deep pain, but can never deny itself or be extinguished; it would still deliver and will at length save all. All this is exhibited with the most glowing sympathy, and in a great variety of ways. But no image is here more expressive than that of marriage. As the wife is united to her husband by indissoluble and sacred bonds, and the faithful husband justly feels angry at the unfaithful wife, punishes her or even casts her off for a time, but never can really cease to love her, so has the ancient Church, the mother of the churches now living, borne children, during her unfaithfulness to Jehovah, who resist Him unworthily, and yet the love of Jehovah never departs from them, although he is angry and punishes them."

This last sentence may indicate also why we regard this relation of love between Jehovah and Israel not merely as the doctrinal background of the contents of our book, but an expression of those contents themselves. For Hosea, from the very opening, presents expressly this relation of Jehovah and Israel under this figure of the husband, who just because he is united to his wife by the bond of love, must as surely be indignant with her and punish her, as he must also be unable to let her go, but must hold out to her the prospect of a cordial reinstatement in her former relations.

The figure becomes indeed less prominent as the book advances, but appears through the whole sometimes more obscurely, sometimes more clearly, and even emerges again into the foreground in several passages. The conception of Israel's conduct is based upon this image, partly as it is designated infidelity, whoredom, which applies not merely to idolatry itself, but sets forth the principle that underlies the false, untheocratic policy of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes in its alliances with the world-powers; and partly and still more as everything that is said of Jehovah's conduct towards Israel, of warning, of threatening, of pun-

1 [Comp. Delitzsch, *Comm. on Job*, Introduction. — M.]

ishing, of promising, is rooted wholly in this fundamental idea of Jehovah's love to Israel as his spouse drawn from the analogy of wedded love, — except that this image of wedded love is interchanged with the figure of paternal love, equally strong in another direction, as especially in chap. xi. in accordance with the fact that the subject of that chapter is Jehovah's conduct towards Israel in his childhood. This latter relation is thus placed parallel to a relation of personal love based upon a moral course of life. This view explains why our book, in a way so peculiar to itself, refers so much to Israel's earlier history. For it is natural that love should remind the one beloved, who had become unfaithful and refused to reciprocate affection, of the beginning of their attachment; that the husband should recall to the wife, when such a rupture of the marriage tie has taken place, the first love with which he met the bride (as the father also reminds the backsliding son of the love displayed toward him in childhood). On the other hand when the course of infidelity is complete, he is led to remember the beginnings and foretokens of such behavior in earlier days, and he explains the present in the light of the past, justifies his anger and chastening in the present and his bitter complaints over the unfaithfulness of his wife, by adducing the complaints made and the punishments which had to be inflicted in former times. If the recollection of the past thus intensifies the bitterness of injured love, it is equally potent, on the other side, in preventing the extinction of love; for to the wounded and deeply injured one it again presents the attachment in its whole extent, and forces the thought upon him irresistibly and imperceptibly: "This is the one upon whom thou hast bestowed thy love, with whom thou hast been and art united in love, and whom, therefore, thou canst not let go from thee utterly and forever."

If we now consider the contents of the particular divisions of the book, we find this much to be clear at the outset; first, that chaps. i. and ii., and next that chaps. iv.–xiv. are closely connected. With regard to the first and smaller division, chaps. i. and ii., the fact is more incontestable than with regard to the second and longer one, which, in any case demands itself a subordinate division. The question is now, how we are to reckon chap. iii. It has been attached by some to chaps. iv.–xiv. as their introduction. But the correct view will be found to be given in the words of Hävernick, that "the symbolical method of representation unites the first three chapters into one whole." And if we are reminded of the somewhat abrupt introduction of chap. iii., we must observe that an explanation of the symbol is given in vers. 4, 5, — an explanation in plain words, in fact the first one which occurs, of the discourse in chap. ii., which from ver. 4 onwards is figurative throughout, representing Israel as an adulterous wife, so that we here arrive at a conclusion which clearly expresses the sense of what precedes.

It will more clearly appear that the view which regards chap. iii. as belonging with chaps. i. and ii. is the correct one, if we remember that the contents of chap. i. (and therefore also of chap. ii.) certainly fall in an earlier period than the discourse in chaps. iv.–xiv. (as chaps. i.–ii. relate expressly to the "beginning of the word of Jehovah to Hosea"), namely, in the period preceding the fall of the house of Jehu (chap. i. 4), while chaps. iv.–xiv. belong to the second period defined above, after its fall; for it is in that portion that Assyria first appears, which is decisive. If now the symbolical narrative in chap. i. must have appeared earlier than chaps. iv.–xiv., it is only proper to suppose that chap. iii., so analogous to it, falls in the same period, that we have here generally fragments drawn from the earlier part of the Prophet's ministry, and that therefore chaps. i.–iii. form a connected whole. It is thus natural to assume that the symbolical mode of presentation, in general, characterizes the earlier period of the Prophet's labors.

We thus assume two main divisions: chaps. i.–iii. and chaps. iv.–xiv., and in favor of such partition have not only internal grounds but also an external argument, namely, that each part is the product of a distinct period. The one of earlier origin is, however, comparatively small, and the opinion is plausible that the Prophet, in committing the whole to writing, prefixed the former part as a kind of introduction to the greater prophetic discourse which constituted the main division, like a vestibule inviting an entrance. The contents, also, are appropriate to this purpose with their symbolical actions and figurative discourses. It has something enigmatic, surprising, straining the attention, and so preparing the way for reaching and hearing what is expressed in a simple, literal form.

The first introductory portion (chaps. i.–iii.) which contains "the beginning" of the divine revelation to Hosea, describes the (spiritual) adultery of the kingdom of the ten tribes in its apostasy from Jehovah to idolatry, and the conduct of Jehovah towards this unfaithful spouse.

The most severe punishment even to rejection is threatened against it, but, as the end and aim of such punishment, new and higher blessedness is held out in prospect.

This is set forth in three sections, each of which contains both threatening and promise, with the aim of showing clearly how little these are to be separated, how, rather, both have a common source in the love which Jehovah has to Israel, since He stands united with it in (spiritual) marriage.

1. Chap. i. 2—ii. 3. The Prophet must symbolically, by a marriage with a wife of whoredom, hold up to Israel its sin, and, by the names of the children born of this marriage, announce its rejection (i. 2–9). Yet its future acceptance and reunion are immediately pictured with a few outlines (ii. 1–3).

2. In copious, extraordinarily vivid, and, especially in the latter portion, most sublime language, Jehovah unbosoms Himself to his unfaithful spouse, Israel. He utters a severe accusation against her, and proclaims that she shall be punished by falling into a condition of extreme want, that she shall be laid waste (vers. 4–15). But with this new "leading into the desert" a change occurs; Jehovah concludes a new alliance, rich in blessing, with the spouse returning in penitence to Him (vers. 16–25).

3. Chap. iii. The Prophet must again show symbolically by his conduct towards the wife of whoredom, whom he was commanded to marry, that God still loves his adulterous wife, Israel, and would only in his love humble her, that she might return to Him.

The second division, the main portion of the book (chaps. iv.–xiv), the product of a later period, as we saw above, is in form distinguished from the earlier part by the entire absence of symbolical acts, the discourse being literal throughout. The purport is, however, similar in its essential features, inasmuch as here also punishment and even destruction (on account of its apostasy) are announced to the kingdom of Israel. But at the same time also it is predicted that it shall be received back on the ground of its expected conversion; indeed a time of richest blessing is at last held out to it in prospect. Jehovah appears here also as one who loves Israel, and must therefore punish it for infidelity, though as unable to give it up, and as being forced to be again merciful and to bless according to the law of love. The object is accordingly essentially the same; this inability to give up Israel, this ultimate favor and blessing form here also the picture of the future. But it costs labor, as it were, to realize this aim; the threatening is so severe. This constitutes by far the largest portion of the whole, and only after it has disclosed its full severity, does promise break through, when Jehovah seems as it were to call to mind his former love for his people, thus showing that from the beginning love did not fail, but that even his accusings and threatenings arose from deeply wounded love. This suggests already that the ground upon which the prophecy proceeds, is changed. Idolatry, as unfaithfulness to Jehovah is, it is true, always the fundamental offense on account of which judgment is declared, but to this is added not only moral pollution, but also dissolution of the state, and especially the pursuance of a false policy altogether opposed to the character of a people of God, which sought help in external aid against the distresses which invaded them, partly in Assyria and partly in Egypt. It is the unfaithfulness of Ephraim towards Jehovah, mainly in this form of a political attitude entirely untheocratical, against which the prophet appears, and on account of which he announces judgment, the punishment threatened being destruction by those very world-powers, Egypt, and especially Assyria.

This second main division, of such large extent, calls itself for a division. But this is a matter of great difficulty. It is, however, certain that the attempt to assign the several chapters to different periods of time, and thus to view the succession of the chapters as determined by the order of their composition (Maurer and Hitzig among others), must be unsuccessful, even if it be conceded that these chapters did proceed originally from different occasions. It is remarkable, for example, that in chaps. iv., v., vi., Judah is mentioned frequently along with Ephraim, while afterwards it retreats more into the background, so that it is natural to infer different situations as their occasions. But as the whole lies before us at present, there is a certain unity apparent, though it is difficult to follow definitely the course of thought. We must abandon the supposition of a strictly logical arrangement of the parts in view of the nature of the language, marked, as it is, by excitement and constantly surprising abruptness. Different expositors adopt most widely differing divisions, while others abandon the attempt altogether.

It is clear, at the outset, that from chap. iv. onwards accusation of Israel occupies the chief place, as describing its degradation and guilt; and Ewald has rightly perceived that

chap. iv. is to be separated as containing a general charge, relating to the apostasy generally of the people from Jehovah, and the moral deterioration thereby induced. Then in chap. v. the denunciation is more specially directed against those of exalted position (comp. vers. 1), and as its subject, in addition to the general unfaithfulness to Jehovah, something special enters, namely the false, untheocratic policy of "going after Egypt and after Assyria." This is, at all events, the new element here, and in attempting to exhibit the progress of thought, this point must so far be made prominent. In chap. vi. this does not appear, but the chapter is so closely connected with chap. v., that no partition is supposable. On the other hand the denunciation of the untheocratic policy becomes still more marked in chap. vii., being there directed chiefly against the court itself, while chaps. v. and vi. seem to be aimed more particularly at the priests. Hence chap. vii. also is to be combined with these chapters. So in all these chapters the threat of punishment is uniformly united with the accusations. But actual *announcement of judgment* appears first in chap. viii., accusations however being still uttered. Compare the beginning, chap. viii. 1, and it seems to show more especially that the punishment, namely, the transportation into Egypt and Assyria, and therefore, the destruction of the state, the carrying away into captivity, is presented as the reverse side of the calling upon Egypt and going to Assyria. For the same reason chaps. ix. and x. are to be added with chap. viii. Chap. x. 15 forms a fitting close to this section. But the contrast to the transportation to Egypt and Assyria appears again only in chap. xi. 11, so that we stand first upon new ground in that passage.

Thus with chap. xi. begins a new section, and with it enters *promise.* Jehovah's love to Israel, which seemed to be utterly swallowed up in the announcement of judgment, here breaks forth. At first, indeed, only in the form of a reminder of its manifestations in early times, how it was vouchsafed to Israel in childhood. This is naturally expressed in a sorrowful complaint against that Israel, who now in his manhood requites that love so ill, displaying in his apostasy the basest ingratitude. Hence we have again in chap. xi. 5, the most severe threatening. But Jehovah has again brought his love to remembrance; it is He that loves Israel, as had been already shown in the beginning; this love is his essential disposition towards Israel, and thus cannot in the present belie itself; it oversteps wrath and appears as mercy, and promise breaks forth on its shining way, like the sun after dark and long distressing clouds. The brief recollections of former times in chaps. ix. and x. only served to give point to the keen accusings. But in chap. xi. the sun breaks forth brightly. It is promise that now prevails.

But the storm is not yet past. In chaps. xii. and xiii. denunciation and announcement of punishment reappear. Yet, if they are still severe, they are much less protracted. But, chiefly, there seems to be a new standpoint gained. It is the past that is dwelt upon, namely, what had transpired between Jehovah and Israel in former days. But this is a great step gained. Hence the weighty words are twice uttered: "I am Jehovah, thy God, from the land of Egypt" (chaps. xii. 10; xiii. 4). This thought does, it is true, serve to sharpen the complaint, and with it to sharpen the threatening; but that people cannot be given up who have, from the beginning, Jehovah as their God. Hence in chap. xiv. 2–4, the exhortation to return, which shows clearly his determination not to give them up; and now, upon the ground of their expected conversion, love at last flows forth in the fullest promise, which is no longer merely a cessation of punishment, as in chap. xi. 9 ff., but, positively, holds out in prospect a glorious state of blessedness.

The course of thought is accordingly not perfectly undeviating, but, especially towards the close after the highest point has been reached, rather deflected, as it tends towards the conclusion through the wrestling of love and justice, which it thus expresses. Ewald assumes after chap. xi., a sort of preliminary conclusion, marking an interruption in writing. It is, at all events, correct to assume that the train of thought has then reached a certain completion, after which the former order of the discourse is again taken up.

The following scheme will exhibit our attempt to divide the section:—

Jehovah pleads with Israel, his beloved but unfaithful spouse (comp. chap. iv. 1).

I. First discourse (chaps. iv.–xi.).

1. Chaps. iv.–vii. The complaint, addressed—

a. (Chap. iv.) against the people as a whole, on account of their idolatry and deep depravation of morals promoted by the priests.

b. (Chaps. v.–vii.): against the rulers (priests, chaps. v.–vi.), court (chap. vii.), especially on account of their ungodly and calamitous alliance with the powers of the world.

2. Chaps. viii.–x. The judgment, extending even to the carrying away of the people to bondage under Assyria.

3. Chap. xi. Mercy; God cannot utterly destroy Israel, whom He has always loved, but will again have compassion upon them even though they have most vilely requited his love.

II. Second discourse (chaps. xii.–xiv.).

1. Chap. xii. Complaint is once more resumed, and —

2. Chap. xiii., judgment is most emphatically declared; but —

3. Chap. xiv., in hope of conversion, love finally flows forth in the promise of richest blessing.

[Those who may wish to become acquainted with the various methods of dividing the book which have been proposed, will find them exhibited and discussed in the *Biblical Repertory*, Jan. 1859, art. "Book of Hosea," by Prof. Green, of Princeton. A division having much to recommend it is that adopted by him from Keil, according to which each of the two main sections (chaps. i.–iii., iv.–xiv.) is divisible into three smaller ones (i. 2–ii. 1, ii. 2–23, iii.; iv. 1–vi. 3, vi. 4–xi. 11, xi. 12–xiv. 9). Each of these smaller sections in both of the main divisions is marked by its beginning with denunciation and ending with promise. — M.]

In harmony with the fundamental thought of our book, as above presented, according to which it describes the sorrow and indignation of Jehovah's love, so sorely wounded by Israel's infidelity, the *language* is of a peculiarly emotional and impassioned character, reflecting unmistakably the rush and swell of the feelings. "This anguish of love at the faithlessness of Israel so completely fills the mind of the Prophet, that his rich and lively imagination seeks perpetually by variety of imagery and fresh turns of thought, to open the eyes of the sinful nation to the abyss of destruction beside which it is standing. His profound sympathy gives to his language the character of excitement, so that for the most part he merely hints briefly at the thoughts instead of studiously elaborating them, passes with abrupt changes from one figure or simile to another, and moves forward in short sentences and oracular utterances, rather than in gently rounded discourse." (Keil.) Jerome (*Præf. in XII. Proph. Min.*) says of him: "*Commaticus* (literally, cut up = short) *est et quasi per sententias loquens.*" Eichhorn (Introduction, § 555, p. 286) says not unaptly: "The style of the Prophet is like a garland woven of various kinds of flowers, comparisons intertwined with comparisons. He breaks off one flower and throws it away, only to break off another immediately. He flies like a bee from one bed of flowers to another, bringing the honey of his varied sentences." With these features are connected manifold anomalies in the structure of his clauses, rugged transitions, ellipses, asyndetical constructions, inversions, and anacolutha. Add to this that his diction is marked by rare words and forms and unusual combinations, and it may be conceived how difficult is the exposition of the book. "One must often read between the lines if he would establish the connection between the several thoughts and sentences. We will not be charged with overstatement, if we assert that the Prophet is in this respect one of the most difficult of the prophets of the Old Covenant, and indeed of all the Biblical writers." (Wünsche.)

The abruptness of the language, reaching often to obscurity, does not merit any censure, for this peculiarity is to be explained from the contents and the subject of which the Prophet was full. "His heart," remarks Wünsche, "full of the deepest anguish, on account of the destruction and the inevitably approaching dissolution of the State, makes him neglect all artistic and harmonious treatment and exhibition of his theme." And Ewald says with perfect correctness: "In Hosea there is a rich and lively imagination, a pregnant fullness of language, and, in spite of many strong figures, great tenderness and warmth of expression. His poetry is throughout purely original, replete with vigor of thought and purity of presentation. Yet at one time we find the gentle and flowing predominate in his style, while at another it is violently strained and abrupt, and his irresistible pain causes him often to give a hint of his meaning without allowing him to complete it. There is also thrown over the whole language the burden of the times and of the heart so oppressed by them."

If, finally, we inquire into the *composition* of our book, we find no ground whatever for maintaining that the author was any other than the Prophet himself, or for the assumption that, although the several discourses came from Hosea, they were yet first compiled by another and later editor. It has been thought that their aphoristic character justifies such a hypothesis, but we are convinced that this is not so marked as one would certainly suppose at first sight, and that the several portions are not only governed by one fundamental idea, which would probably have become still more obscured in the hands of a later redactor of such fragments, but that the several parts are brought into a definite order and connection.

There can therefore be scarcely a doubt that our book came from the hands of the Prophet precisely in that form in which we possess it to-day. "On closer examination the book is seen to form a complete whole executed according to a fixed artistic plan, and with corresponding beauty. This artistic plan and execution only need to be rightly understood in order to show us that it was finally published as a whole, and in its present form, by the Prophet himself." (Ewald.) But as to the relation in which this book stands to the numerous prophetic utterances of Hosea, we are compelled to assume that we have not in this book those discourses presented in their original form. If this had been the intention of the Prophet, we should have had a greater number. Moreover the book is framed too decidedly according to a certain plan, making it clear that it was designed to form a continuous and regular composition. We have therefore to regard it as a selection from his discourses, or more correctly, as a free and independent working-up of the substance of them by the Prophet himself. His several utterances are combined by him into one complete picture. He would employ not only his lips but also his pen, and by his writings would testify concerning the holy anger of the love of God, and thus appeal to the consciences of the people.

But here the question may be asked, whether our book is the first product of Hosea's pen, whether, more particularly, earlier writings are not embodied in it. At the outset it is certainly to be assumed that Hosea was in the habit of writing down his several discourses. But keeping this in view, the difference between the first part of the book (chaps. i.–iii.), and the second (chaps. iv. ff.) is so significant, the contents of the first part, moreover, falling in an earlier period, that Ewald's conjecture has much to support it: that chaps. i.–iii. contain the substance of an earlier composition of Hosea, which he embodied in the present one when he executed it. Even if we hesitate to go so far as this, we must probably assume that the separate sections of chaps. i.–iii. had been published already by the Prophet, since we have in the narratives of the symbolical actions merely the drapery in which they were to be presented to the world and not actual occurrences (see below). For in those chapters punishments were announced which were inflicted at a time earlier than the completion of the whole book. The Prophet could incorporate into his book only at a later period earlier actual events; but these symbolical transactions existed only in the mind of the prophet, and in publishing them he must have come forth at a time when these parabolic narratives could address themselves to the conscience of the people, and therefore a considerable period before the composition of the whole book, which, as we now have it, contains, in its second part, discourses of a much later time. Such publication of the symbolical transactions might indeed have been at first only oral; but the contents of these sections seem less appropriate to that mode of announcement.

The preservation of the whole book in the destruction of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes may be readily explained. "Through the intercourse which was kept up between the prophets of the Lord in the two kingdoms, it was carried soon after its composition into Judah, and became widely diffused in the circle of the prophets, and was thus preserved, as Jeremiah especially has made frequent use of it in his predictions. Comp. Aug. Küper, *Jeremias, Librorum SS. Interpres atque Vindex.* Berlin, 1837, p. 67 ff." (Keil.)

After what has been said it will scarcely be necessary to add anything special in the way of exhibiting the importance of our prophetic book in Old Testament history and doctrine. Into the internal relations of the kingdom of the ten tribes, against which he, like his older cotemporary, Amos, directs his words of rebuke and threatening (by which these two prophets mark a new step in prophecy, in distinction from Joel and Obadiah, regarding the heathen not merely as the objects but also as the instruments of the divine judgment, which is inflicted with the greatest severity against the people of God themselves), — into the internal relations of this kingdom Hosea gives us the deepest insight, and affords a most essential addition to the knowledge which we have thereon from his older cotemporary. As to its doctrinal teaching, however, there can be no doubt as to the significance of a book, which regards the relation of Jehovah to Israel so profoundly and specially from the standpoint of holy love, of a holy wrath of love, and looks so far into the depths, into the intensity as well as into the sincerity, of such love as, in the examination of the contents and fundamental thought of the prophecy, we have shown that it does. In this he stands above his nearest predecessor, Amos. That prophet also discerns the favor of God shining again at last upon his people after the tempests of his wrath. But he grounds it upon the consciousness that this judgment is and shall be only one of trial and not of destruction, and

that room is thus prepared for mercy through the revelation of wrath, while Hosea traces back this duality in the divine revelation to the nature of God Himself, by his more profound conception of the divine love.

Our book is therefore truly a classic for the right understanding of the Old Testament conception of God with its interaction of love and wrath, and of the nature of the Old Testament revelation concerning God. Only such a God who can so be angry and so love, who in all His love so displays anger and in all His anger so displays love, could give up his Only-begotten Son to the accursed death for the deliverance of rebellious man.

§ 3. *The Symbolical Transactions in Chaps. I. and III.*

What is recounted in these chapters is so peculiar, and has always been regarded under such different views, that a more intimate discussion cannot here be foreborne: and to it we shall therefore devote a separate section in the Introduction. In this the results of the exegesis of the passages in question are of course to be anticipated, and must therefore be referred to here. This much is however certain that, according to the narrative, mention is made of a marriage of the Prophet with an unchaste woman at the command of God himself. Here we have a stone of stumbling. It is true that the ground of moral offense contained herein does not exist according to some interpreters, inasmuch as the "wife of whoredom" whom the Prophet is to marry, is regarded as being such in the spiritual sense in which a "whoring" of Israel is spoken of = serving idols; that Hosea had scruples about marrying a whorish, that is, an idolatrous woman; and that it is commanded him not to stand aloof from her but to exhibit symbolically in his own domestic fortunes, that is, by his union with such a woman, Jehovah's relation to his people. But this view is quite untenable. For idolatry cannot be a symbol of idolatry, a marriage with an idolatress cannot be a symbol of a like marriage, namely, the marriage of Jehovah with an idolatrous people. This, altogether apart from the consideration that such a command of God to the prophet is not conceivable, that such marriage would have produced upon the people an effect exactly opposite to the one intended, namely, the presentation of idolatry to the consciousness as something sinful, if we can suppose that any effect was produced. Umbreit also seeks to establish more firmly the interpretation of the woman's whoredom as spiritual whoredom, by maintaining that Hosea, in order to represent God's marriage with Israel, was commanded to enter into marriage with Israel; but, since all Israel had become adulterous towards God, that he was obliged in order to enter the marriage relation with Israel, to unite himself to a whore in the spiritual sense = idolatress. Such a wife thus represents, as an individual, the whole people. And this outward marriage of the Prophet is the symbol of his spiritual marriage with his people. But Kurtz remarks rightly against this hypothesis, that the notion that the Prophet himself was to enter into a spiritual marriage with Israel is quite unfounded, that such a conception is not once found in the Old Testament, which knows only of a marriage of Jehovah with Israel; that the Prophet by his external marriage could symbolize only that spiritual marriage of Jehovah, and not his own spiritual marriage with Israel. For this reason his marriage, in order to represent the marriage of Jehovah with adulterous Israel, must be a marriage with a whorish woman in the outward sense.

Thus it is beyond question that it is such a marriage of the prophet that is here described, but the question is now: Must we assume an actual outward event in the life of the Prophet or not?

It is clear that we have before us a transaction which has a symbolical significance and is therefore in so far a symbolical transaction; but the question is just this, Is this an actual event intended as a symbol of a higher truth, or do we move outside the sphere of objective reality? The latter supposition does certainly seem, on the first view, to be excluded by the language employed, which does not give us the slightest hint that we have presented to us anything else than outward reality, but rather creates the impression that it is a record of actual events. And it is not to be maintained that the narrative has to do with something physically impossible, that it bears directly upon itself the stamp of unreality in the external sense. But it appears all the more probable that something morally impossible is described; for would it not be in the highest degree incredible that a prophet should marry an unchaste woman, and that at the express command of God? Hence the literal interpretation has been rejected already by the Chaldee Paraphrase and by the Jewish Commentators. But this plea is itself not altogether without difficulties. The reference to Lev. xxi.

7–14, at all events, proves nothing: for what is there forbidden to a priest cannot be directly transferred to a prophet (comp. Kurtz: "That prohibition is based upon the consideration that the priests were to represent the ideal holiness of the people, and is rooted in the same ground as is the law that a priest must be free from physical blemishes. The latter injunction is as far as possible from implying that physical defect is sin in an Israelite, and the same holds with regard to the former"). And then it is one thing to have intercourse with an unchaste woman, in order to practice fornication with her, and quite another to marry such a woman. The one is as assuredly sinful as the other is in itself not so, any more than it was for Jesus to be a friend of publicans and sinners. For the prophet would not have entered into such an alliance that he might be assimilated to the woman, but in order to raise her up to his own level, to rescue her from her sinful habits: "*Non propheta perdidit pudicitiam fornicariæ copulatus, sed fornicaria assumsit pudicitiam, quam antea non habebat*" (Jerome).

Such an alliance in the Prophet would have been in the very highest degree surprising. But it may be asked, Was it not intended to be so, in order that the people, in their astonishment at such an anomaly, should ask what it meant, and might then learn to their shame, that it held up to them a mirror in which they could perceive their own relations with God? The Prophet would reinforce his oral preaching by a preaching of outward action; this marriage would have been a lasting actual proclamation of punishment to the people, not impeding the influence of the Prophet, but furthering it.

But on a closer examination of this view, which understands actual events to be described, most serious objections to it are immediately suggested. A beautiful picture could have been drawn exhibiting the morally reforming influence of this alliance upon the light-minded wife and the neglected children of the first marriage, and how worthy of God it would have been, answering to his compassionate love seeking that which was lost! But of this there is not a syllable — not a syllable *could* be said. Rather, this idea, which alone could neutralize the moral objections against this alliance with an unchaste woman, is completely excluded by the whole spirit and aim of the command which the Prophet received. It is just the present "whorish" conduct of Israel, the still existing and continued and persistent infidelity towards Jehovah, that is represented by this marriage of the Prophet, and punishment and rejection are then exhibited as the necessary fruit and conseqence of such conduct. Thus the "wife of whoredom," whom the Prophet is to and does marry, is necessarily to be regarded as one who does not amend her ways, or is withdrawn from her life of sin by her alliance with the Prophet, but who even now in this alliance with him is conceived as practicing unchastity, who shows and proves herself to be unfaithful to her husband. Otherwise she would not be at all an image of Israel as thus situated, nor would this marriage be at all an image of the present conduct of Israel towards their husband, Jehovah. Strictly speaking, this wife of whoredom would have been bound, so long at least as her marriage with the Prophet was to testify to Israel of its sin, not to forsake her sinful life (until special corrective measures, related in chap. iii. should be taken with her, so that she might become a testimony of that which God, still retaining his love for Israel, would do to them).

There is no need to prove that the assumption of an actual occurrence would lead to an ethical monstrosity. With the design of this marriage to exhibit the conduct of Israel towards Jehovah, is most clearly connected a circumstance, which shows more plainly than ever the non-reality of the related transaction, namely, that the Prophet is expressly enjoined to take a wife of whoredom and *children of whoredom*. This is at first sight surprising, but becomes quite intelligible if we think of the design, of that which was to be exemplified, the conduct of Israel and all its individual members. Israel in the concrete is represented only by the latter; but this separation of a part from the whole is very frequently found in relation to Israel. Israel as the whole then appears as the mother, the individual members as the children (comp. chap. ii. 4 ff.). Now both Israel as a whole and all the members of the people are unfaithful to Jehovah, they "commit whoredom." If therefore the actual condition of affairs in its whole extent is to be represented by a marriage of the Prophet, he must take to wife a woman still practicing unchastity, and, at the same time, have children, who are children of whoredom, that is, naturally (see also below in the exegesis) not those who were the fruit of the illicit commerce of the mother (a woman characterized as a woman of whoredom could, in fact, have no other, and the remark would be quite superfluous), but children who stand in the same relation to whoredom as the mother does, that is, who practice whoredom as she did, and bear therefore a faithful resemblance to

her. How then is the Prophet to "take" these children of whoredom? Naturally the notion of such "taking," which in the case of a woman means marrying, must be modified in the case of children. Two senses are supposable. One is that he obtains them by marriage as children already born to his wife. In that case he is obliged to find out an unchaste woman, who has children that already commit whoredom; and not only so, but they must actually continue that habit; for otherwise the symbol no longer meets the conditions of the case, the sign no longer agrees with the thing signified. In short, under the assumption of an objective reality in this transaction, we come again to an ethical monstrosity. But the case is still worse, if we understand "taking" the children in the sense of begetting them with the wife (and this view is the more probable one; see the exegesis below). For Jehovah is married to Israel, and they are unfaithful to Him; and Jehovah has begotten children by this marriage — the individual members of the people — and they also are unfaithful to Him, they "commit whoredom." So the Prophet, in order to manifest this, must not only take a wife of the above description, but also beget children by her who are of the same character as she, are unchaste like her. It might be known antecedently that they would be so; they are, so to speak, predestined to such a character; if it were otherwise, they would fail to perform their part, they would not represent what it was intended they should. To speak of actual reality in such a case is now a sheer impossibility. The thing signified, that which is to be represented, is revealed too clearly through the sign, that which is to set forth the relation; only one thing could make it plainer, namely, that the Prophet should add: of course this was not really done! — but one must be almost blind to suppose, even for a moment, that it could be. The symbol is arranged simply in accordance with the thing to be symbolized, without reference to the consideration that in concrete reality it would encounter invincible obstacles: naturally such reference does not need to be had, because the transaction was not realized *in concreto* and *in facto*, but was only a plastic symbolizing of a certain condition of affairs which was to be denounced.

We must now go a step backwards. That which morally excites such objections lies not merely in the fact of this marriage with an unchaste woman, of whom again unchaste children were to be born, but also in its *design*. It is to be observed that the alliance spoken of has its aim purely out of itself, terminates in nowise upon itself, but is merely a mean to an end. This end is not the begetting of children. They are certainly to be begotten, but they are themselves only means to an end, with their significant names, which they receive in order to announce to the people their rejection. This marriage was thus to be contracted purely for the purpose of symbolizing another fact which lay altogether without the sphere of marriage. Such a conclusion cannot be disputed unless there is imported into the words something foreign to them. Let the words be followed closely, let not separate expressions: he went and took, etc., be emphasized, but the whole be accepted and understood as it reads, with no interlarding of all sorts of notions, about the use and plausibility of this alliance, of which nothing is indicated, and the narrative will be seen to relate to a marriage and procreation of children which are purely symbolical and described solely as serving the purposes of an emblematic representation. And that this transaction, considered as an occurrence of outward reality, is something inconceivable, opposed to the spirit and significance of marriage, is so clear, that the Prophet did not need to give the least hint of its unliteral character (if, indeed, that had been the custom of the Prophets). No; an actual marriage is not concluded simply in order to symbolize something different; the marriage is a symbol of a higher covenant. But its design is not realized in such symbolizing. That would be a trifling with the idea of marriage, agreeing but little with the profound conception of that state, which the Prophet brings to light in this very act of conceiving the relation between Jehovah and Israel as a marriage. I can give a name to a child born of a marriage, for the purpose of indicating something by it symbolically; but it would be something quite different if I were to enter into the married state simply for this purpose. And hence the reference to Is. vii. 14; viii. 3, 4, where, however, an outward act is narrated, is altogether unsuitable. If recourse is had to the words of the text, it may be replied that many prophetic passages, *e. g.*, Jer. xxv. 15 ff., Zech. xi., show clearly that the simple words of the narrative are not decisive. In such passages the words, taken literally, even when relating to symbolical transactions, seem to record an occurrence entirely objective, though no one supposes that they really do so. In other passages this inference is more patent, while here it is obscured, though only apparently so; for that which it is ethically inadmissible to sup-

pose should be done by the command of God, is just as incredible as the occurrence of that which is physically impossible.

We have now to consider, finally, in what a brief period the action is performed, the rapidity with which the several acts are, and are intended to be, presented. It is the rapidity which, if the word may be allowed, is well suited to a dramatic conception, but not to concrete reality. By literalists the fact is entirely ignored that this symbolical course of teaching would have required three years at least for its complete unfolding. And in connection with the other considerations the remark of Simson (in spite of the strictures of Kurtz) is perfectly just: "After each of the four principal scenes which make up the symbolical narrative (vers. 2, 4, 6, 9), the explanation and occasion of the symbol follows, connected with 'for' in such a peculiar way, that it may be gathered indubitably, simply from this connection and the whole manner of expression, that the figure is not presented in its actuality, but is only devised for the sake of making evident to the senses the lessons it unfolds." Thus the view which regards the actions described as real occurrences is seen to be untenable if we do not even go beyond the first section; nor do we need to add to the other arguments the relation of chap. iii. to our section. On the contrary, we think that arguments have been too much drawn from that portion of the book, and therefore too largely based upon external grounds, and for this reason less convincing than they should be.

Now after this negative result, that the narrative is not to be regarded as relating actual occurrences, the question first arises: What then does it relate? A vision? So the Jewish commentators, and in recent times especially Hengstenberg. This view does indeed surrender the externality of the transaction, but it holds to its actuality, only assuming that it was not experienced outwardly but inwardly. With regard to this hypothesis of a vision, it is admitted that a "beholding" lies at the foundation of all prophetic announcement, that is, a vision in the wider sense (comp. the remarks on Amos, chap. vii.). But we are not justified on this account in assuming at once that the Prophet was in an ecstatic state. There is not the least hint of such a thing given in our passage; for nothing is said of a vision in the narrower sense, and hence we are unwarranted in adopting such an assumption here. He certainly "beheld," as all the prophets did, that which he here relates in *parabolic discourse*. It is thus that the narrative is most properly designated.

But it may be asked: If, according to the above reasoning, it leads to a series of monstrosities to regard the (symbolical) transaction as an actual occurrence, was it allowable for the Prophet even to present it in a parabolic dress? This objection, which it seems to be, is possible only under a misapprehension of the whole aim of the exhibition. The action represented is certainly bold, is surprising, is, we say directly, exorbitant. But it was just intended to be so. It was intended, as we remarked above, to rouse the hearer into uttering the question: What? do I hear aright? What do you say the prophet must do? The thing to be set forth, the thing signified, is something abnormal, contradictory, something which it seems could never occur, that Israel should "commit whoredom, departing from their God"; and not this merely, but also (which, to be sure, is the necessary consequence of the former) that God should reject this His people, His spouse, to whom He had always been faithful, to whom He had been so beneficent. Since this condition of affairs to be represented, the "thing signified," was of such a character, it must be set forth by the description of an occurrence of a like kind, that is, one which is just as abnormal, contradictory, and unprecedented, thus necessarily rousing the attention to consider how a prophet could marry a whore at the bidding of God, and by her beget children, who should receive, also at God's command, names indicative of punishment, from their resemblance to their mother. There is therefore intentionally something monstrous, something ethically impossible, held up to the people as though it had happened, in order that it might be forced upon their consciousness, how utterly abnormal, how monstrous, how opposed to the right order of things, is that which they had done to God, and which He must do to them. That, therefore, which the prophet relates to the people is related to them, *because* it is something monstrous; but being so, it was just as certainly not a statement of actual fact for this very reason. If we were to maintain the opposite, we should mistake the design of the prophet. He would say: As Israel has acted towards God, and as He must treat his people in return, so would I, the prophet, act if I were to marry a whorish woman. As impossible as the latter is, so impossible should the former be; and yet alas it is a reality!

But it may be objected: The prophet's marriage would indeed represent to the people their apostasy from Jehovah, and the names of the prophet's children would bring perpetu-

ally to their consciousness the judgment which they must expect in return; but if that marriage did not take place, and the children never existed, how could such a design be carried out? Now, this objection is based simply upon an unwarranted supposition, and the inference drawn therefrom must be false. It is taken for granted that such an *argumentatio ad oculos* by outward action must have been made by the Prophet, that the Prophet intended to do so, judging from the statements of the book, and that therefore we have a narrative of actual occurrences, while it is never said that the prophet had any such intention. The Prophet may just as well have intended to appeal to the people, not by means of outward action, but by a discourse in which certain actions were the drapery of those truths which were to be proclaimed. Whether this discourse was originally oral or not, as other prophetical discourses usually were, or whether it existed from the beginning in a written form, we do not know. If the former supposition is correct, we are not obliged to assume, any more than in other prophetical discourses, that it possessed precisely the same form as that which we now have, since it would have the form appropriate to oral discourse. It is quite wrong, however, to insist that such a mere recital, — heard to-day and forgotten, perhaps, to-morrow, — could have but little influence, and make but little impression, for at least its fixed written form followed with its words speaking perpetually to the conscience. And it has been said already above in § 2, that such a fixed form was probably given to it before the composition of the whole book, as at present constituted, and during the period in which the discourses of the first part were pronounced.

But another argument still is adduced against the supposition of a parabolic recital, which is seen to be so necessary from all that has been said. It is urged that this would derogate from the character of the prophetic word; that the Prophet speaks expressly and repeatedly of a command of the Lord which he had received; that, if the whole were only a feigned transaction, the words, "the Lord said," would be degraded into a meaningless, rhetorical phrase, which would be opposed to the divinely objective character of Prophecy. Certainly our whole position would be viewed with distrust, if this drapery of narrative in which the Prophet clothes his message of instruction and rebuke, which he records, and in which he makes mention of an express command of God, were to be regarded by him as only an arbitrary device (rhetorical or as being appropriate to the plan of the book). But what is there to support such an assumption? In this, as throughout his prophetic ministry, the Prophet rather acted and spoke from a divine impulse. He had beheld *what* he had to say to the people, reproach of their sinfulness and threatening of punishment, and *how* he had to say it, that is, he had received from God in spirit an authorization and an impulse to adopt *this* form of rebuke, to present his divine commission in the form of feigned events. It has been further remarked (*e. g.*, by Kurtz), that we have the words: go, take, etc., and not: go, tell the people that thou hast taken a wife, etc. But this objection is without force. For the expression: "The Lord said to Hosea, go, take to thyself," etc., is itself included already in the parabolical discourse as well as vers. 4, 6, 9; and to insist that the Prophet must have given some hint that he was not intending to record an actual occurrence, argues a somewhat crude notion of the obligations of a writer. A parabolic discourse must not bear the appearance of being so; on the contrary it must present itself as describing actual events (comp. *e. g.*, Judges ix. 8; 2 Sam. xii.), though it does not really do so. It bears in itself a *sapienti sat* which shows that it does not, — and thus our narrative is really twofold. In general the fact is evidently always overlooked, that we have before us in these seemingly historical portions, not a statement concerning the Prophet, but the written discourse of the Prophet himself; that, therefore, behind the words there stands, so to speak, the prophet writing. It is not his duty to record events as an historian; and the inference is unwarranted, that he must do so because what he says has the form of an historical record. Hence, according to correct conceptions as to what different kinds of composition require, no objection based upon the form of representation can be made to the parabolic view. And the circumstance that the Prophet is spoken of in the third person, cannot be adduced as a proof that he does not here speak and narrate (figuratively), and that a statement is made concerning him. It cannot, at least, by any one who regards the whole book to be the composition of the Prophet and not a mere compilation by another. Moreover, in chap. iii. the Prophet introduces himself as speaking of himself in the first person. And, finally, it proves nothing that the name and origin of the woman are given. Even if the names are not applied appellatively (see in the exegesis), nothing would be more natural than to invent names for the occasion, which would be a device appropriate in a symbolical discourse.

If we now turn to chap. iii. and hold the identity of the woman named there with the one in chap. i., the question is decided of itself. For if the marriage, mentioned in chap. i., of the Prophet with this woman, was not an actual occurrence, it is self evident that his dealings towards her in chap. iii. are not more historical. If he did not in reality marry this woman, then he did not actually perform what, in chap. iii., he is commanded to do, love her. The woman is, in chap. i., only a feigned person, and if the same person is meant in chap. iii. she cannot be a real person. But if we regard the woman of chap. iii. as not identical with that of chap. i., we have, in the fact that the Prophet becomes connected with another woman, disregarding his marriage with the one mentioned in chap. i., we have here, I say, a clear indication, applying to the whole narrative from the beginning, that these descriptions do not relate to actual events in the Prophet's life. For it is plain that the assumption of his separation from the first wife, or of her death in the interval, is only a device to escape from a dilemma. Such circumstances must have been stated, if actual events had been related; but not a syllable is found to this effect, simply because it was assumed that no one would think of real occurrences.

But, leaving the consideration of the circumstances connected with the woman mentioned in chap. i., and regarding simply by itself the command given to the Prophet in chap. iii. according to his own representation of it, we find the matter here to be somewhat different.

The fact is to be set forth that Jehovah preserves his faithfulness to Israel in spite of their unfaithfulness, and therefore does not utterly cast them off, but only adopts, for their good, corrective measures springing from such abiding faithfulness. Thus something is to be exemplified which would not be expected, since rejection would be the more natural course, but nothing which should not be, nothing which could be found fault with or would invite censure. And accordingly the symbol, or that which the Prophet was commanded to do, was not something ethically inadmissible or monstrous, but only something difficult, unusual, because involving great self-denial, namely, that he should remain faithful to an unfaithful wife. And what is declared to have been done by him is in the same way not something inadmissible, but only something unusual; for by a series of corrective measures the unfaithfulness of the wife is to be brought home to her heart, while, at the same time, it was to be shown that she would not be rejected. Now though it might appear as if very little could be urged in disproof of the actual occurrence of the event described (that is, if it be viewed as an isolated account), yet here also grave objections arise upon a closer examination. Even if the woman of chap. iii. is not to be identified with that of chap. i., the former is hardly conceived of as being of another character than the latter. The woman is not one who was previously chaste and afterwards became unchaste, but one whose adultery is only the manifestation of her former disposition, and a continuation of her previous mode of life, and the Prophet would thus be represented as entering into such intimate relations with her — whether he married her or not would not be certain — which again would border closely upon the morally offensive and become for the Prophet an impossibility. Here the canon is again to be applied, that acts, which are of an essentially immoral nature and fall under moral criticism, cannot be regarded upon external grounds as having been actually performed by divine command. Thus a husband might, it is true, be so controlled by the thought of God's faithfulness, as even to remain faithful to an unfaithful wife, that is, from moral and religious considerations, whether suggested by himself or by another. But this is not the case presented here: the narrative speaks not of an act undertaken or a course of conduct discontinued upon any such ground, but simply of a positive command of God, which was not intended to remind the husband of a duty demanded of him, but which was issued with the design of a manifestation of God's attitude towards the people of Israel, a design altogether foreign to the nature of marriage or the injunction of fidelity.

The Prophet is represented as doing what he here does purely for this external purpose; not from the recognition of a duty, and not to call attention to such duty: he does it plainly in order to symbolize something different. This is perfectly agreeable to the parabolic mode of presentation; but as soon as we come to hold the notion of an actual transaction, the moral sense revolts against it as against a trifling with things which belong essentially to the sphere of the moral and religious life, and therefore cannot be employed as means to serve another purpose. Finally, if we had real transactions presented to us and not a symbolical form, it could not be very well supposed that the woman, accepting the gift of the Prophet, would be inclined to obey his command. The possibility of the opposite would

rather have to be assumed, which was manifestly not the case. But in the parabolic narrative this happens naturally just as the purposes of instruction require.

On the question treated in this section compare the thorough discussion by John Marck, *Diatribe de Muliere Fornicationum*, Leyden, 1696, reprinted in his *Comment. in 12 Proph. Min.*, ed. Pfaff, 1734; and in more recent times especially Hengstenberg, *Christologie*, i. 205 ff., who denies the actual occurrence of the events described, and the minute investigation of Kurtz, *Die Ehe des Propheten Hosea* [The Marriage of the Prophet Hosea], 1859, reprinted from the Dorpat *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, who holds as strongly to the literal interpretation.

[The question so fully discussed above is encumbered with difficulties so great as to seem almost insuperable, and it is probable that it will never be satisfactorily settled. Instances might even be quoted of the same interpreter holding directly opposite opinions within a very short period of time. If the history of interpretation were to be thoroughly surveyed, it might perhaps be found that the majority of distinguished names have been arrayed on the side of the literal view. It may be remarked, however, that among modern interpreters, the more reverent and cautious of those of Germany seem, as a general rule, to favor the theory that the prophet was not to fulfill the commands actually and outwardly. Among the Anglo-American Commentators, on the other hand, the preponderance of opinion still is, as it always has been, in favor of the literal interpretation. So among the recent writers, Pusey and Cowles. The opinion that the Prophet beheld the events in vision has been maintained by Pococke and lately by Fausset. This theory is discussed at length by Cowles in a dissertation appended to his Commentary, to which the reader is referred. It may be remarked, generally, that the main support upon which the defenders of the literal interpretation rely, is the nature of the language employed, bearing, as it does, not the slightest indication that the commands were to be fulfilled in any other than a literal manner, and that the opponents of this theory take their stand chiefly upon the supposed moral impossibility of the literal fulfillment. The conclusion which each reader will arrive at for himself will depend mainly upon the relative force which these considerations may have upon his mind. — M.]

§ 4. *Literature.*

SINGLE COMMENTARIES: *Hoseas Chaldaica Jonathanis Paraphrasi et R. Salom. Jizchaki, R. Abrah. Aben-Esræ et R. David Kimchii commentariis illustratus* (Hosea, illustrated by the Chaldee Paraphrase of Jonathan and the Commentaries of R. Solomon Isaaki, R. Abraham Aben-Ezra and R. David Kimchi), edited by Von der Hardt. Helmstadt, 1703, 4to; new edition by J. D. Michaelis, 1775; Rabbi Isaac Abarbenel, *Comm. in Hoseam*, edited by Franc. ab Husen, Leyden, 1687.

Of the age of the Reformation: Capito, *Comm. in Hoseam*, Strassburg, 1528; Brentius, *Comm. in Hoseam Proph.*, 1560 and 1580.

Of the last part of the sixteenth, with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Jac. Matthæus, *Prælectiones in Hoseam*, Basle, 1590; Am. Polanus, *Analysis Libri Hoseæ Proph.* Basle, 1599; Hier. Zanchius, *Comm. in Hoseam*, Neost., 1600; Dav. Pareus, *Hoseas, Pr. Comm. illust.*, Heidelberg, 1605–1609; Mich. Krackewitzius, *Comm. in Hos.*, Frankfort, 1619; Balth. Meisnerus, *Hoseas*, Viteb., 1620; And. Rivetus, *Comm. in Hoseam*, Leyden, 1625; *Exposition of the Prophecy of Hosea*, by Jer. Burroughs, Oxford, 1643–1652, 3 vols.; Henr. Ursinus, *Hos. Comm. literali enucleatus*, Norib., 1677; Pococke, *Commentaries on Hosea, Joel, Micah, and Malachi*, Oxford, 1685; Seb. Schmidius, *Comm. in Pr. Hos.*, Frankfort, 1687; Franc. Vavassor, *Comm. in Hos. Proph.* (In his works, Amsterdam, 1709); *De Prophetie van Hosea outledigt door* J. Biermann [The Prophecy of Hosea expounded by J. Biermann], Utrecht, 1702; Wackius, *Expos. et illust. Hoseæ*, Ratisbon, 1711; *Hoseas Historiæ et Antiquitati redditus ab* Herm. von der Hardt, Helmst., 1712; Dathe, *Dissert. in Aquilæ reliquias interpr. Hoseæ*, 1757; Manger, *Comment. in Hos.*, Campis, 1782; Schröder, *Der Proph. Hosea aus bibl. und weltlichen Historien erläutert*, etc. [The Prophet Hosea elucidated from sacred and profane histories], Dessau, 1782; L. J. Uhland, *Annotat. Hist. Exeg. in Hoseam*, Tübingen, 1785–1797; J. C. Volborth, *Erklärung des Proph. Hosea* [Exposition of the Prophet Hosea], Göttingen, 1787; C. T. Kuinoel, *Hoseæ Oracula Hebr. et Lat. Perp. Annot. illustr.*, 1792; J. Ch. Baupel, *Der Proph. Hosea erklärt* [The Prophet Hosea explained], Dresden, 1793.

Of the present century: E. G. A. Böckel, *Hoseas*, Augsburg, 1807; J. C. Stuck, *Hoseas*

Propheta, Leipzig, 1828; Simson, *Der Proph. Hosea erklärt und übersetzt* [The Prophet Hosea explained and translated], Hamburg and Gotha, 1851; O. C. Krabbe, *Quæstionum de Hos. Vatic. Spec.* [A View of Questions relating to the Proph. of Hosea] (Hamburg Programme), 1836; A. Wünsche, *Der Proph. Hosea übersetzt und erklärt mit Benutzung der Targumim, der jüdischen Ausleger Raschi, Aben Ezra, und D. Kimchi* [The Prophet Hosea, translated and explained, with a use of the Targum, and of the works of the Jewish Expositors, Raschi, Aben Ezra, and D. Kimchi], Leipzig, 1868. The most complete of recent times. The copious illustrations drawn from the Chaldee Paraphrase, and the three Jewish Commentaries are very valuable. F. A. Löwe, *Biblische Studien, Erstes Heft: Beiträge zum Verständniss des Propheten Hoseas* [Biblical Studies, Part First: Contributions to the Interpretation of the Prophet Hosea].

For the Practical Exposition: L. C. Gräf, *Der Proph. Hoseas in 172 Wochen-Predigten erklärt* [The Prophet Hosea explained in 172 Weekly Sermons], Dresden, 1716; P. Diedrich, *Die Propheten Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, kurz erklärt für heilsbegierige, aufmerksame Bibellesen* [The Prophets Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, briefly explained for earnest and attentive Bible-readers]. Leipzig, 1861.

[The special works in English upon Hosea, besides those of Burroughs and Pococke mentioned in the above list, are: Bishop Horsley, *Hosea, translated from the Hebrew with Notes, Explanatory and Critical*, 2d ed. London, 1804; Rev. Wm. Drake, *Notes on Hosea*, Cambridge (England), 1853. Dr. Pusey's *Commentary upon Hosea* in his *Min. Proph.* (in which he has advanced as far as Micah), on account of his excessive allegorizing and spiritualizing tendencies, is not uniformly of the highest critical or exegetical merit, but is worthy of all praise for the great value of its practical remarks. Bishop Wordsworth, who belongs to the same patristic school, treats of the Minor Prophets in the 6th volume of his Commentary (London, 1872). — M.]

HOSEA.

SUPERSCRIPTION. Chapter I. 1.

The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri,[1] in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel.

PART FIRST. Chapters I. 2–III. 5.

Chapters I. 2–II. 3.

A. *The Rejection of the Kingdom of Israel, and especially of the House of Jehu, on account of their "Whoredom," is symbolically announced.* — Chap. i. 2–9.

2 The beginning[2] of the Word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said to Hosea
[In the beginning when Jehovah spoke with Hosea, then Jehovah said to Hosea]: Go, take unto thee a
wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms; for the land hath committed great
3 whoredom, *departing* from the Lord [Jehovah]. So he went and took Gomer the
4 daughter of Diblaim; which [and she] conceived, and bare him a son. And the Lord
[Jehovah] said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little *while*, and I will
avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the
5 kingdom of the house of Israel. And it will come to pass in that day, that I will
6 break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel. And she conceived again, and
bare a daughter. And *God* said unto him, Call her name Lo-ruhamah [Unpitied];[3]
for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them
7 away [that I should keep on forgiving them]. But I will have mercy upon the house of
Judah, and will save them by the Lord [Jehovah] their God, and will not save them
8 by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle [war], by horses, nor by horsemen. Now when
she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son [And she weaned Lo-Ruhamah
9 and conceived and bare a son]. Then said God, call his name Lo-ammi [Not-my-people], for
ye *are* not my people, and I will not be your *God* [yours].[4]

B. *And yet Israel will be again accepted by God.*

Chapter II. 1–3.

1 Yet [And] the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea,
which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, *that* in the
place where[5] it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people, *there* it shall be said

2 unto them, *Ye are* the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah
and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head;
3 and they shall come up out of the land: for great is the day of Jezreel. Say to
your brethren, Ammi [My-people], and to your sisters, Ruhamah [Compassionated].

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 [Ver. 1. — בְּאֵרִי — explained by Gesenius as meaning, fountain; by Fürst *et al.*: one who explains, comp. Deut. i. 5. If a symbolical meaning is sought, the latter is probably to be preferred; if not, the signification must remain undecided. There seems to be no necessity for holding a symbolical sense. — M.]

2 Ver. 2. — תְּחִלַּת דִּ׳. By the construct state in which the first word stands the following (דִּבֶּר יי׳ being not an infinitive but a preterite), becomes a sort of substantive phrase subordinate to תחלת. [תחלת is thus made equivalent to an adverb of time = when at first (Ewald). The construction would thus be similar to that of the phrase בְּיוֹם דִּבֶּר־יי, Ex. vi. 28; 1 Sam. xxv. 15 *et al.* See Ewald, *Gr.*, § 286, 3. For the view which regards the first clause of the verse as a "kind of superscription," see the exposition and Green, *Heb. Gr.*, § 255, 1, 2. — M.] — זָנֹה תִזְנֶה, according to the familiar Heb. emphatic mode of expression, the זנה is here marked as complete.

3 Ver. 6. — רֻחָמָה is usually regarded as a participle with מ fallen away. But according to Keil it is rather the 3 fem. præt. (in the pausal form on account of the Athnach, as in ii. 3, 25) = "she finds no sympathy, is not compassionated." [This is a question which must remain undecided, as the word occurs only in pause. Yet the common view is preferable, because (1) the part. is the better form for an appellative, as it approaches more nearly to a noun, and (2) if the verb became an appellative it would probably remain a fixed form, or at least not be subject to such changes as the 3 præt. undergoes in pause. The part. would of course retain the Kamets in any case. — M.]

The difficult words כִּי נָשֹׂא וגו׳ probably give a further explanation of the אֲרַחֵם. נָשֹׂא = to forgive: I will no longer have compassion on them that I should forgive them (Meier: כִּי is climactic = how much less forgive them). The object: sin, is certainly then to be supplied as also in Gen. xviii. 24. But, according to the context, it is easier to supply this than to translate with Hengstenberg: I will take away from them, namely, what they have, or everything they have. In chap. v. 16, נשׂא in the sense of taking may without difficulty be construed absolutely. But here, especially with the dative, an object is expected.

[Pusey, Henderson, Cowles, *et al.* follow E. V. in rendering: But I will utterly take them away. Newcome: But I will surely take them away. Ewald agrees with Meier in the translation given above. Henderson admits that נָשָׂא followed by לְ elsewhere means to forgive, and that it might have the same sense here if it were only preceded by the copulative וְ, but that כִּי meaning *but* excludes such repetition. Here it is forgotten that כִּי may mark consecution or result, as it does frequently, comp. Gen. xl. 15; Is. xxix. 16; Ps. viii. 5, with many other passages. But Schmoller as well as Keil, who discern the true connection and meaning of the words, have overlooked the occurrence of the inf. before the future of the same verb. All the other critics give to this combination the force of emphasis or intensity. Is it not better to suppose that repetition is implied, which is the fundamental notion? And if the last clause is explanatory of the preceding, the עוֹד of the one must find its counterpart in the frequentative construction of the other: I will no longer have mercy on them that I should *continue* to forgive them. Greater fullness of meaning and appropriateness is also seen to mark this part of the verse: God had overlooked their sins often before, but He would not keep on overlooking them forever. — M.]

4 [Ver. 9. — לֹא אֶהְיֶה לָכֶם: I will not be for you, *i. e.*, not be yours, not belong to you. There is no need of maintaining that "God" is understood, as Henderson, Cowles, and the English expositors generally do. The sense is complete without supposing an ellipsis. Houbigant (followed by Newcome) has gone so far as to transpose the letters of the last two words into אלהיכם. But this has no support in the MSS. or Versions, and is besides very improbable, not to mention that it supposes the omission of the latter ה. — M.]

5 Chap. II. 1. — בִּמְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר. We might be inclined to render: in the place of [its being said]; the usage of the expression elsewhere is however too clearly opposed (comp. Lev. iv. 24-33; xiv. 13; Jer. xxii. 12; Ezek. xxi. 35; Neh. iv. 14). But מְקוֹם with the subject following is perhaps = instead of, in Is. xxxiii. 21.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. *Superscription.* It has been shown already in the Introduction (§ 1) that the chronological limits assigned in the title must be admitted to be essentially correct. Difficulties have been suggested to the minds of some from the circumstance that when the duration of Hosea's ministry is given, it is, in the first line, placed in relation to the reigns of Judah, and that a king of Israel is mentioned only in the second line. To argue from this, however, that Hosea belonged to the kingdom of Judah, is inadmissible; for as we saw in the Introduction, all other evidence goes to prove that he was a resident of the Northern Kingdom.

But a further difficulty is felt. Only one king of Israel is named, whom Hosea long survived, and the succession of Judaic kings brings down the life of the prophet far beyond the time of that single monarch, Jeroboam II. Hence it is alleged that the second part of the superscription does not agree with the first.

Keil seeks to solve this difficulty by assuming that the Prophet acknowledged only the legitimate rulers of the kingdom of Judah as the real kings of the people of God; and that he defined the limits of his ministry according to the real succession of that kingdom. He introduces along with the names of those kings, that of the Israelitish monarch, under whom he began his prophetic course, not only to indicate that occasion more

definitely, but chiefly on account of the significant position occupied by Jeroboam in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes. He was the last king through whom God vouchsafed any aid to that state. The succeeding rulers scarcely deserved the title of king.

But this explanation, brought forward in order to defend the originality of the superscription, can scarcely be acquitted of the charge of arbitrariness. (The precedence assigned to the Judaic kings would be better explained on the hypothesis that Hosea, at a later period, took up his residence in Judah and there composed his book.) Ewald, who, to be sure, does not admit in its full extent the correctness of the chronological statements of the superscription, supposes that the allusion to the kings of Judah was added by a later hand (which also inserted Is. i. 1), while the remainder is the old original superscription, which, however, he thinks belonged at first only to chaps. i., ii.

The question, whether the superscription in its present form is quite original, must be allowed to remain undecided.

[As serving however to defend the genuineness of the superscription, comp. with the view of Keil adduced above, the following full and forcible presentation of the probable design of the prophet in its insertion given by Hengstenberg in his *Christology:* "Hosea mentions, first and completely, the kings of the legitimate family. He then further adds the name of one of the rulers of the Kingdom of Israel, under whom his ministry began, because it was of importance to fix precisely the time of its commencement. Uzziah, the first of the series of the kings of Judah mentioned by him, survived Jeroboam nearly twenty-six years. Now, had the latter not been mentioned along with him, the thought might easily have suggested itself, that it was only in the latter period of Uzziah's reign that the prophet entered upon his office; in which case all that he says about the overthrow of Jeroboam's family, would have appeared to be a *vaticinium post eventum*, inasmuch as it took place very soon after Jeroboam's death. The same applies to what is said by him regarding the total decay of the kingdom which was so flourishing under Jeroboam; for, from the moment of Jeroboam's death, it hastened with rapid strides toward destruction. If, therefore, it was to be seen that future things lie open to God and his servants 'before they spring forth' (Is. xlii. 9), it was necessary that the commencement of the Prophet's ministry should be the more accurately determined; and this is effected by the intimation that it took place within the period of the fourteen years during which Uzziah and Jeroboam reigned contemporaneously.[1] That this is the main reason for mentioning Jeroboam's name is seen from the relation of ver. 2 to ver. 1. The remark made in ver. 2, that Hosea received the subsequent revelation at the very beginning of his prophetic ministry, corresponds with the mention of Jeroboam's name in ver. 1. But this is not all. . . . . There was a considerable difference between him and the subsequent kings. Cocceius remarks very strikingly: 'The other kings of Israel are not viewed as kings but as robbers.' Jeroboam possessed a *quasi* legitimacy. The house of Jehu to which he belonged, had opposed the extreme of religious apostasy. It was to a certain degree recognized even by the Prophets. Jeroboam had obtained the throne not by usurpation but by birth. He was the last king by whom the Lord sent deliverance to the Ten Tribes; comp. 2 Kings xiv. 27."

The English commentators hold to the originality of the superscription, with the exception of Noyes, who speaks of it as "doubtful." The arguments which establish it are mainly these: (1.) The very fact of its existence in its present form from the earliest known period. (2.) The analogy of other prophetic books as well as of many other portions of the Old Testament, the genuineness of whose superscriptions has never been successfully impugned either by German critics or their English followers. (3.) The improbability of any other hypothesis. Any "redactor" (Ewald and others) could have had no reason to insert such a peculiar title. Its anomalous character shows it to have been the work of the author himself. Any other would either have made no allusion to the kings of Israel, or would have given a complete list of the contemporary ones. There is a purpose manifest here which a collector would not have conceived, and which it was beyond his province to convey to the world by embodying it in an addition to his author's writings. (4.) The exact correspondence between the character of the superscription, the contents of the book, and the position of the author, as partly shown above, and as might be further proved abundantly.

The superscription therefore is original, and original in its present form. As to the place of its composition there is no improbability in the opinion, mentioned by Schmoller above, that with the rest of the book it was composed in Judah. But this cannot explain, as he supposes, the anomalies of the superscription. It only increases the difficulties. Why was an Israelitish king mentioned at all? This question remains unanswered, while the old difficulty of the non-allusion to succeeding kings of Israel remains in all its force. The true solution must therefore be sought not in any local conditions of the Prophet, but in his necessary relations as a Prophet of God to the two kingdoms, as determined by their respective characters, and in his desire to assign definitely the limits of his ministry. — M.]

A. Vers. 2–9. *The Prophet announces symbolically to the Kingdom of Israel that it will be rejected on account of its Whoredom."*

Vers. 2, 3. **In the beginning of Jehovah's speaking with Hosea . . and bare him a son** — בְּהוֹשֵׁעַ, literally, in Hosea, that is, *into* Hosea. The simple translation *in*, as expressive of an inner revelation which he received, is excluded even by the usage of the language (comp. Zech. i. 9, 14); as also is the explanation: by Hosea. This "into," however, must not be modified into simple "to him." This would have been — אֶל. בְּ evidently expresses here a closer, personal relation into which the speaker enters with another person, while אֶל, "to," merely indicates the direction of the discourse. It therefore betokens an energy of speaking, probably also in connection with a certain continuity; answering best to our "speaking with" (comp. besides the passages cited above, also Num. xii. 6, 8; Hab. ii. 1). The whole clause, תְּחִלַּת־דִּבֶּר, could be regarded as a kind

1 [This will show the groundlessness of the opinion of Noyes, that "from the contents of the book it is probable that he did not exercise his office until after the death of Jeroboam, when the kingdom of Israel was in a state of great distraction and anarchy." — J. F. M.]

of superscription = The beginning of that which Jehovah spoke with Hosea. The discourse would then begin with וַיֹּאמֶר. But it is preferable to attach the whole clause, as a specification of time, to the following וַיֹּאמֶר, and to take תְּחִלַּת, which is therefore = in the beginning, as an accusative of time: In the beginning, when Jehovah spoke. The sense would be: When Jehovah began to speak with Hosea, then, etc. [For the internal structure of the clause, see the first Grammatical Note. — J. F. M.] This means that God has begun his revelation to the Prophet with the command immediately following; in other words, that the prophet must enter upon active duty with the following testimony against the spiritual adultery of the kingdom of Israel: **Go take to thee a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom.** "Wife of whoredom:" זְנוּנִים occurs only in the plural, expressing a plurality of acts. — אֵשֶׁת ז׳, a woman whose element is whoredom, with whom the זנה is a thing not merely incidental. From this designation, as applied to the woman it is evident that it was just in her marriage with the prophet that she would show herself to be an אֵשֶׁת ז׳, and would thereby become an adulteress (though naturally this does not exclude the idea that the Prophet begets children by her). The truth to be represented demands this view of the case. For it is Israel married to Jehovah that commits whoredom.

But who are the יַלְדֵי ז׳? "Children" mentioned along with the "wife," naturally make the latter appear to be the mother. But they cannot be called children of whoredom simply for the reason that their mother is an אֵשֶׁת ז׳. They can have that designation only because they themselves stand essentially connected with זְנוּנִים. But in what relation? It is readily suggested: "they are related to it as its results = they are the fruit of the זְנוּנִים, of the mother, are born of the mother in consequence of her unchastity, are of illegitimate birth." But, according to this explanation, the genitive would have a sense different from that which it has in the former connection, and this creates a difficulty. If a woman, who practices lewdness and is in fact wholly given up to it, is called אֵשֶׁת ז׳, it is most natural to assume that the construction exactly similar and immediately following should be understood in like manner to express action and disposition. יַלְדֵי זְנוּנִים therefore = children who act and are disposed like their mother, children of the same character as their mother. And this must be admitted to be the correct explanation when it is remembered what is to be represented by the woman and her children, namely, Israel conceived of as the mother of a people, and its children. And the fact which is to be established with regard to Israel and its children is, that they all practice whoredom; comp. the explanatory clause, כִּי־זָנֹה תִזְנֶה הָאָרֶץ. It is not said that the children are of adulterous origin, but that the whole people — the people as a whole and in their *individual members*, or, according to the Hebrew personifying mode of conception, the mother and her children, commit lewdness. "Go, take to thee:" לְקַח אִשָּׁה is, according to the constant Hebrew usage, equivalent to our phrase, "to take a wife," *i. e.*, to take a woman to be a wife, to marry. And וַיִּקַּח (ver. 3), which expresses the fulfillment of the command given with קַח, has certainly no other sense. In our verse, another object, still, יַלְדֵי זְנוּנִים, is joined to לקח. This is done by *zeugma*, in the sense: *Accipe tibi uxorem et suscipe ex ea filios scortationum.* He is, accordingly, to ally himself with an unchaste wife, and the children which he begets with her are to be like their mother. This is just the position of Israel. Israel, Jehovah's spouse, committed lewdness, and the children, who belonged both to Jehovah and to her, acted just as their mother did. Wife and children grieved equally the Husband and Father. The reference here is therefore not to children which the woman is supposed to have had before her marriage with the Prophet. The force of the painful experience of grief over his own children, through which the Prophet was to pass, would then be lost. By these children of whoredom we are not to understand directly just the three children mentioned afterwards, for the expression is a general one, but they do certainly fall under this category, and it is only they who are named.

The command which the Prophet receives is supported by the words: **for the whole land is whoring, whoring away from Jehovah** (falling away from Jehovah). זָנָה: evidently a metaphorical expression here designating apostasy from Jehovah to idolatry, according to the conception of Israel's relation to Jehovah as that of a marriage. He who serves idols accordingly commits whoredom and breaks the marriage vow, is unfaithful to a lawful spouse, because surrendering himself to a stranger, with whom no marriage relation can exist. This notion of infidelity is further indicated expressly by the addition: מֵאַחֲרֵי יי׳. מֵאַחֲרֵי is a significant composite preposition, which expresses not merely absence from Jehovah, but conveys the notion that a relation, the direct opposite of הָלַךְ אַחֲרֵי יי׳, has been entered into, and therefore expresses forcibly a position of infidelity, of a discontinuance of fidelity. On this notion of זָנָה in a spiritual sense, see the Doctrinal Section. As זָנֹה תִזְנֶה expressed the intensity of the apostasy, so הָאָרֶץ expresses forcibly its extent. As the sequel shows, it is the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel who are meant. This whole sentence gives the ground of the command which the Prophet receives to take a wife of whoredom. He is to take a wife who commits bodily unchastity because the whole land commits whoredom spiritually. Why? The most natural answer is: In order to hold up to the people a mirror in which they might behold their guilt, and thus to bring to their consciousness more surely and powerfully than could be done by mere didactic discourse, how greatly they, by their idolatry, had sinned against their God, and dishonored Him. God would thus be represented as standing in a position which would hardly be imputed to a man, namely, that of living in marriage with a woman given up to adultery; or that such a relation would be as dishonoring to God as marriage with a whorish woman would be to a prophet. But the taking of this wife had, besides, the express

purpose of begetting children with her, who by their names should announce to Israel the punishment incurred by its guilt. For to the people (represented by the woman and her 'יַלְדֵי זְנ) was to be presented the consequence of their whoredom, and it was to be brought to their consciousness what punishments their rightful husband, Jehovah, would inflict as the consequences of their infidelity. The children, as 'יַלְדֵי זְנ, represent the children of Israel in their guilt, but, at the same time, by their names, the punishment thereby entailed, and as those names, significant of punishment, are affixed to those who represent the guilt, the fact is expressed that the punishment is directly consequent upon the guilt.

It is clearly incorrect to lay stress upon קַח־לְךָ and the alliance of the Prophet with the woman, by itself considered, and so give to the thought a positive turn: that, by the Prophet's marriage with a lewd woman, and by the announcement of its results and by the names of the children, it was intended to be illustrated how Jehovah entered into a marriage with the faithless nation of Israel through Hosea, and that the children and the consequences of such marriage would represent severe chastisements from the hand of love (Löwe). This notion is imported into the sentence. In so far as it is correct, it belongs to chap. iii. and not here. But of an alliance being entered into between Jehovah and the disloyal people, there is nothing said even there, simply because Jehovah had, on his part, entered into such a marriage with the people long before. To infer from the fact of the Prophet's marriage that God entered into the same alliance would be a false application of the image. The Prophet cannot be conceived of as standing already in that relation. He must contract this marriage in order to symbolize Jehovah's marriage with the people *already existing*. It would be just as baseless, however, to infer from this marriage contracted by Hosea with the woman, that the original covenant between God and his people at Sinai is to be represented; that God had concluded the alliance with the people as with a pure virgin, and that they became unchaste after they came under the covenant; that therefore also 'אֵשֶׁת זְנ is not a woman who has already practiced lewdness, but that an undefiled virgin is to be understood, of whom, however, it was foreseen that she would become unfaithful and bear children of adultery. Apart from the emphasis placed upon the words 'אֵשֶׁת זְנ, this view is seen to stand in direct contradiction to the causal sentence: "for the land," etc. Because the land commits whoredom must the prophet take a maiden who will become unchaste? No. "The marriage which the prophet was to contract was simply intended to symbolize the relation already existing between Jehovah and Israel, and not the way in which it had come into existence. The wife does not represent the nation of Israel in its virgin state, when the covenant was being concluded at Sinai, but the nation of the Ten Tribes in its relation to Jehovah at the period of the prophet, when that kingdom, considered as a whole, had become a wife of whoredom, and in its several members resembled children of whoredom." (Keil.)

Ver. 3. **Took Gomer, a daughter of Diblaim.** The command is obeyed without delay. גֹּמֶר occurs elsewhere only as the name of a nation: Gen. x. 2, 3; Ezek. xxxviii. 6. If the name be taken here symbolically, the derivation from גָּמַר might afford the signification, "completion," *i. e.*, not annihilation, utter ruin; but, completion of whoredom = completed whoredom (so already Aben Ezra, Jerome). According to Fürst it is also possible to explain, "fire-glow," literally, a being consumed with passion. דִּבְלַיִם occurs only as a proper name. In attempts to interpret it, it is usually explained as = דְּבֵלִים, fig-cakes (so already Jerome), in which an allusion is perceived to chap. iii. ver. 1, where raisin-cakes appear as an image of that idolatry which ministers to sensuality. "Daughter of fig-cakes" would then = loving fig-cakes, or more generally, *deliciis dedita*. The identification of דִּבְלַיִם and דְּבֵלִים has its difficulties, however. Fürst supposes that the root דבל, besides the sense, press together, from which we have דְּבֵלָה, fig-cake, has also the signification, enclose, and thus gains the meaning, embracing (strictly, as in the dual form: double-embracing, copulation), therefore: daughter of embraces. And this would naturally mean, not the fruit of such embraces, but (as in the other explanation, expressing a connection or intercourse), abandoned to embraces, *complexibus dedita*. The interpretation of these names is accordingly attended with difficulties. For we cannot say that in themselves they necessarily demand such an explanation, at least so far as our knowledge of the Hebrew language permits us to judge. But it cannot be adduced against the admissibility of such interpretation that the names are not elucidated for us as are those in vers. 4 ff. "This may be simply explained from the circumstance that the name was not given to the woman, but that she had it already when the prophet married her" (Keil). If the names have really these meanings, it is clear that a woman designated, "*consummata in scortatione, complexibus dedita*," would be a striking picture of Israel, uttering a severe rebuke.

[Henderson, holding the literal interpretation of the narrative, maintains that there is no need of assuming any symbolical meaning whatever for these names. On the other hand, if the narrative be not the record of actual occurrences, the necessity of a symbolical interpretation of the names is manifest. Most of the English expositors who note the names show a general agreement with the explanations: completed whoredom, and: given up to dainties.—J. F. M.]

And she conceived and bore to him a son. The taking of the wife had evidently in view the birth of children. That the woman conceived by the prophet, and that the son is to be regarded as his, is clear even from the simple connection of the words, but is placed beyond question by the express addition: bore to him. The opinion that the children were illegitimate, has arisen only from the false assumption, at variance with the context, that the woman must have formerly been a virgin; for the designation, 'אֵשֶׁת ז, must then be justified, and if she were not such before marriage, she must have become unchaste after it.

Vers. 4, 5. **Then the Lord said to him: Call his name Jezreel—in the valley of Jezreel.** The names of the children were to be significant, in view of the announcement of punishment, and must therefore be determined by God. That of the first child was to be Jezreel. This was to the

house of Jehu a *nomen cum omine*, on account of the significant connection of the "plain of Jezreel" with that family. It should remind them of that place and of that which occurred there. It cried out to them according to the meaning of the word, "God will disperse," and thus threatened punishment for what was there transacted; and also, according to what follows, presented to their fears the "plain of Jezreel" as the place where the punishment should be inflicted. **Blood-guiltiness of Jezreel.** Jehu had, by one fearful massacre, exterminated the whole house of Ahab in the city of Jezreel (2 Kings ix. 30; x. 17). This city was situated in the plain of Jezreel, which lay in the well-known Valley of Kishon. Now there appears this difficulty: Jehu did this at the express command of God through Elisha (2 Kings ix. 1 ff.), and the deed was afterwards commended by God (x. 30), and yet it is to be avenged as murder upon Jehu's house. It might be said that in the mind of the author of the books of the Kings, and in that of the prophet, there were different views with regard to the violent overthrow of Ahab's house. But the prophet also could regard the overthrow of a family like that of Ahab only as a merited judgment of God, and hold the same view with reference to the extension of the massacre to Ahaziah of Judah and his brethren, by reason of their connection with the house of Ahab. The correct solution may be seen in the words of Keil: "The apparent contradiction is resolved simply by distinguishing between the act itself and the motive by which Jehu was instigated. Regarded in itself, as a fulfillment of the command of God, the extermination of Ahab's family was an act for which Jehu could not be held criminal." But the motive which actuated Jehu was not at all the desire to fulfill the will of the Lord; for, even if he did not use the command of God as a cover for his own selfish and ambitious feelings, he did yet in no way enter into the intention of the Divine injunction. God desired that the kingdom of Israel should be cleansed from idolatry by the extermination of the house of Ahab and the elevation of a new dynasty. In that purpose lay the justification of the deed, which was to be simply a judgment of God upon idolatry. But Jehu, though ceasing from the worship of Baal, retained the worship of the calves. He fulfilled God's command indeed, but only went half way. After he had gained the throne, to which God had destined him, he struck out for himself a false path, from a false policy in which he thought it advisable to retain the worship of the calves, and thus rendered God's intentions nugatory. Thus was the bloody deed of Jehu divested of all real value, and thus it entailed a burden of guilt upon him and his house (wherefore also the possession of the throne was promised to him only to the fourth generation). This section of the book shows directly that the idolatry countenanced by Jehu and his house is to be brought into connection with his deed as an act of blood-guiltiness, for "the whoring of the land" is expressly designated as the sin to be punished (ver. 2). Such apostasy from Jehovah (this is the first announcement), is to be punished by the way in which the deed of blood in Israel is regarded and avenged as a sinful act of blood-guiltiness. The ground of the resentment towards that act therefore does not lie in the deed itself, but the punishment is inflicted for something else without which it would not have been incurred. The objection therefore is not just which maintains that this deed cannot be the crowning crime of Jehu and his house. Nor is there any discrepancy between the prophet and the books of the Kings, where all the members of that house are adduced as guilty by not departing from the sin of Jerusalem. [Pusey: "Jehu, by cleaving against the will of God to Jeroboam's sin, which served his own political ends, showed that in the slaughter of his master he acted not as he pretended, out of zeal (2 Kings x. 16) for the will of God, but served his own will and his own ambition only. By his disobedience to the one command of God he showed that he would equally have disobeyed the other, had it been contrary to his own will or interest. He had no principle of obedience. And so the blood which was shed according to the righteous judgment of God, became sin to him who shed it in order to fulfill not the will of God but his own. Thus God said to Baasha: 'I exalted thee out of the dust and made thee prince over my people Israel,' which he became by slaying his master the son of Jeroboam and all the house of Jeroboam (1 Kings xvi. 2). Yet because he followed the sins of Jeroboam, 'the word of the Lord came against Baasha for all the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord in being like the house of Jeroboam, and *because he killed him*' (ver. 7). The two courses of action were inconsistent: to destroy the son and the house of Jeroboam, and to do those things for which God condemned him to be destroyed. Further yet; not only was such execution of God's judgments itself an offense against Almighty God, but it was sin, whereby he condemned himself, and made his other sins to be sins against the light. In executing the judgment of God against another, he pronounced his judgment against himself, in that he that judged, in God's stead, did the same things (Rom. ii. 1)." M.]

Will visit: alluding to extermination which corresponds to the act of Jehu. It followed not long after the death of Jeroboam II. in the murder of his son through the conspiracy of Shallum (2 Kings xv. 8 ff.). But the threatening goes further: will utterly destroy the kingdom of the house of Israel. "House of Israel" here designates the kingdom of Israel in a special sense, the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, as distinguished from the house of Jehu (ver. 7). The kingly office in general should cease in the kingdom of Israel, and that would naturally be a cessation of the kingdom itself. But this was connected with the fall of the house of Jehu, because, in consequence of that event, a state of the wildest anarchy ensued, so that only one king, Menahem, had a son for successor, the rest being all overthrown and slain by conspirators. The fall of that house was therefore "the beginning of the end, the beginning of the process of rejection" (Hengstenberg).

Ver. 5. **And it happens in that day, that I break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.** "That day" is the day on which the destruction of the kingdom takes place. "Bow of Israel" "by synecdoche for the military force on which the strength of the kingdom and consequently its existence rested" (Keil). The valley of Jezreel is the plain in which the city Jezreel lay, in the Apocrypha and Josephus: τὸ μέγα πεδίον Ἐσδραήλων, or simply: τὸ μέγα πεδίον. There the threat was to be fulfilled, because it was there that the bloody deed was committed. It was, moreover, the natural battle-field of the northern kingdom (comp. Judges iv 5; vi. 33). Israel forms here an unmistakable paronomasia with Jezreel. The words, and especially also the mention of a locality, point clearly to a battle, here an overthrow, by which the before-named destruc-

tion of the kingdom should be effected, and thus in this sentence not only is the punishment indicated, but the mode of its infliction stated. The enemy who should effect this annihilation of the kingdom is not yet indicated. No definite enemy is named before the second part of the book where Assyria is brought forward. (It is not mentioned in the books of the Kings where Assyria dealt this blow.)

Vers. 6, 7. **And she conceived again and bore a daughter, — by horses and riders.** The second child is a daughter who receives the symbolical name: לֹא רֻחָמָה [See Gram. Note]. That the second child should be a daughter is not a voucher for the necessity of the literal view, but is grounded in the inner connection between the female sex and compassion. The announcement that there was no more compassion, becomes so much the more emphatic as the representative of the nation which was not to find compassion was a daughter. For the "female sex finds more compassion than the male," and yet there is no compassion to be found. That must be a sad case indeed! The explanation is incorrect which supposes that the daughter signifies a more degenerate race (*e. g.*, Jerome). **For I will no longer have any compassion.** An explanation, telling what the name of the daughter implies, namely, the exhaustion of Divine compassion. The kingdom owed its preservation in the midst of the prevailing idolatry only to the undeserved compassion of God. [On the rest of ver. 6, see Gram. Note.]

Ver. 7. **But I will have compassion on the house of Judah.** A keen reproach for the house of Israel; if they were like the house of Judah, they too would find compassion; but they are not so; they live only by the compassion of Jehovah as is plain from the words. Why Judah finds favor, and Israel does not, is indicated in the words that follow, in the peculiarly emphatic expression: I will deliver them through Jehovah their God (comp. Gen. xix. 24). Here allusion is made to the connection in which Judah stands with Jehovah, while it contains, at least by implication, the thought that Judah owes its deliverance directly to the fact that it acknowledges Jehovah to be its God, and not, as is further said, to its military force, while Israel on the contrary, trusting in its military strength instead of in Jehovah who is its God no longer, shall for that very reason, and in spite of its warlike resources, utterly perish. **By war** is an unexpected expression as occurring along with the other words; but it naturally means not: by weapons of war, but obviously: by waging war. The bow and the sword are named as the weapons, and the words: by war, show more definitely that the employment of those weapons is meant. **Horses and riders,** according to a familiar mode of expression, indicate the force which completed the military strength in which so much pride was taken. The occurrence of these words at the close is specially emphatic. When Jehovah delivers, He needs no weapons of war, no horses or riders, nor can these give any help without Him.

Vers. 8, 9. **And she weaned Lo-Ruhamah, will not be yours.** The weaning and the conception are to be taken together, that is, as soon as she had weaned, she again conceived, in order to indicate the continuity of the announcement of evil. There is no interruption until the end of the rejection. [Henderson: "The mention of the weaning of Lo-Ruhamah seems designed rather to fill up the narrative than to describe figuratively any distinct treatment of the Israelites." J. F. M.]. **Not my people**: thus should the people in the kingdom of Israel be designated. The covenant relation between God and his people is to be completely dissolved. לֹא־אֶהְיֶה לָכֶם = I will not belong to you [see Gramm. Note]. On the relation of the three threatenings to one another, see the Doctrinal Section (2). On the whole narrative see Introd. § 3.

B. Chap. ii. 1–3. *And yet Israel shall be accepted again.*

Immediately upon the announcement of the judgment extending even to the complete rejection of the kingdom of Israel, follows, to the surprise of the reader, an announcement of deliverance. The verses, in distinction from the Hebrew arrangement, should form one section with chap. i. The arrangement by which vers. 1 and 2 are joined to chap. i., and a new chapter begun with ver. 3, as is done by the LXX. and Jerome, and after them by Luther, is more incorrect still.

Chap. ii. 1. **And the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, — children of the living God.** The promise in ver. 1 *a*, agrees almost verbatim with the promise of Gen. xxii. 17 and xxxii. 13, an agreement which is designed. The rejection of the Ten Tribes just announced forms a strong contrast to the promise there made to the patriarch with regard to the boundless increase of his posterity. Now if the promise is firmly believed one might have doubts of the rejection, or if the threatening of the Prophet were to be accepted one might feel that he had mistaken the promise. Hence the Prophet goes back directly to that promise, and shows how the promise is in no way annulled by the threatening, but that the latter agrees well with the former, which will certainly reach its fulfillment. (Comp. also the reference to that promise in Is. x. 22, in opposition to false security, and in Jer. xxxiii. 22). The promise given to the fathers is just the pledge that a time of deliverance will come again! The announcement of deliverance in ver. 1 ff. is rooted in that promise. Thus the words are strictly to be regarded as a citation = and yet what was promised will come true, that, etc., בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל is therefore naturally to be understood of the people of Israel generally (against Keil). For the promise is made with reference to the whole people, and in ver. 2 mention is made expressly of a union between those who had been divided. But that enlargement of the whole body cannot take place with the return of those whose rejection is now announced. Hence the second member of the verse turns to them. For those who are here called "not my people" are naturally identical with those referred to in chap. i. 9. **In the place in which it is said to them,** etc. There is no need of inquiring what place is meant, whether Palestine or the Land of Exile. The expression has rather the more general sense: "Just as it has been said — so will it now rather be said," etc. The one will answer exactly to the other. **Children of the living God.** Instead of simply: my people, or, people of God, which would be expected at first, we have here a much stronger expression. אֵל חָי naturally in opposition to dead idols, whose service brings the people to ruin They are not merely a people of God, but his chil

dren: they shall have in Him not merely a God but a Father (see below in the Doctrinal Section). There is no allusion here to the moral ground of this gracious acceptance, and such a notion must not be introduced. For to the darkness of the first part (chap. i.) the light is here contrasted quite abruptly and in a way quite unprovided for. The connecting link is not found before the more profound exhibition of the subject in chap. ii. It is understood, of course, that only a remnant is to meet with compassion, but it is not here expressed.

Vers. 2, 3. **And the children of Judah and the children of Israel are gathered together—Ruhamah.** The acceptance of the rejected ones by God will be followed by a reunion of those who had been separated (inwardly as well as outwardly—on the one side belief in God, on the other idolatry). Comp. Jer. l. 4, which rests upon our passage, and iii. 18, and still more fully Ezek. xxxvii. 15 ff. The children of Israel, by being contrasted with the children of Judah, receive here their more restricted and special meaning, as belonging to the Ten Tribes. The words: **appoint for themselves one head**, denoting one common king, express this union still more definitely (comp. chap. iii. 5; Ezek. xxxiv. 24; xxxvii. 24). **And go up out of the land.** These words are difficult. "The land" is, according to most, the land of Exile, and a return from it would therefore be expressed. It is certain that the Prophet does not in our section predict a leading away into exile; for "the place," etc., in ver. 1 is not necessarily to be understood of a foreign land. Yet the remark of Reinke is not incorrect: When it is said of Israel that they are no more a people of God, and will no more receive compassion, the fact is presupposed that they could remain no longer in the Holy Land which they had received as God's people and had retained through his mercy. Already in Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. banishment into an enemy's country was threatened to the people as the punishment of obdurate apostasy. It may be objected, however, that by this explanation, the Prophet would seem to have presupposed an exile of Judah, while he says absolutely nothing of it, but, on the contrary, distinguishes in chap. i. 7, Judah from Israel. Difficulty is felt further in the indefinite expression: עָלָה מִן־הָאָרֶץ, which gives no hint of a land of exile. Reinke, however, as after him Keil, gives this explanation: The prophet refers to Ex. i. 10 and borrows the expression from that passage, a supposition put beyond doubt by chap. ii. 16, 17, where the reacceptance of Israel is represented as a leading through the wilderness to Canaan, and a parallel is drawn to the leading forth out of Egypt, as in chaps. viii. 13; ix. 3, the carrying into Exile is described as a carrying into Egypt (comp. also already Deut. xxviii. 68). Egypt was thus a type of the heathen world, over which Israel was to be dispersed; the deliverance from Egypt a type and earnest of deliverance from captivity and dispersion among the heathen. Well: but would עלה מן הארץ, an altogether general expression, intelligible in itself, have been a strictly technical term for "going up out of Egypt." And upon the single passage, Ex. i. 10, in which, moreover, no allusion is really made to a withdrawal from Egypt as from a land of captivity, but Pharaoh only speaks of a departure of the Israelites from it, could such a linguistic usage have been based, that עלה מן הארץ would have been understood correctly without any explanation? No other passages occur upon which such a usage could have been founded, and none in which it actually occurs. In chap. ii. 15, *e. g.*, "Egypt" is expressly mentioned. No matter how much, therefore, may be said for this explanation as being actually correct, it cannot be approved unconditionally. Others therefore understand "the land," simply of Palestine. "Going up out of the land," is thus viewed either as a marching up to Jerusalem (Simson), and to this the context gives much support, especially in the reference to the reunion of Israel and Judah under one head (David). This would imply that Jerusalem would become again the common central point of the nation. But to this also objection may be made (in another direction) to the too general expression עלה מן הארץ. The *terminus a quo* would then be quite irrelevant. Why then mention this *terminus a quo*, and omit the *terminus ad quem*—to Jerusalem (Zion), which is the important point? Hence עלה מן הארץ is regarded by others as a marching forth to victory (Ewald), as David did. The comparison with Mic. ii. 14 f. is certainly a fitting one. The preceding words, about their marshalling, and uniting and appointing one head, also suit this view well; one is led to think in this of a rising up to vigorous action (because *viribus unitis*). This explanation demands the mention of the place whither this עלה was to be directed less than the others. But perhaps it is indicated in the following still more obscure sentence: **for great is the day of Jezreel.** This naturally refers back to chap. i. 4, 5. But there Jezreel was the place of overthrow of divine judgment. Keil supposes the same thing is meant here also, that that day of defeat was great, *i. e.*, decisive, glorious, because it formed the critical occasion by which the return of the recreant and their reunion with Judah were rendered possible! Others think of the appellative meaning of the name Jezreel, which certainly appears in chap. ii. 24, 25: God sows. This use of the term is supposed to express the notion that the Valley of Jezreel, in consequence of the overthrow there suffered, becomes a place where God sows the seed of the people's renovation. Keil also admits this as a secondary allusion. But to understand by יוֹם יִזְרְעֶאל, that day of disaster, and to suppose that a day of defeat is called great on account of its good remote results, is a far-fetched notion. Here in chap. ii. 1, 2, in the announcement of deliverance, we find ourselves upon other ground than that of chap. i. 4 ff. What is here praised as great, is not and cannot be the same as that which in chap. i. is announced as punishment, but must be something of an opposite character. But if we leave out of view that day of battle, we have left only the vague notion: time of God's sowing, *i. e.*, when God plants as He had before rooted out, *i. e.*, the time of reacceptance; and such a time is designated as great by גָּדוֹל. But our sentence cannot be supposed to give utterance to such a general thought. The confirmatory כִּי does not suit such a view; for יוֹם יִ' alludes too definitely (as Keil has perceived correctly) to chap. i. 4, and therefore refers to a definite event; only not the same event, but one which is its counterpart. The sense evidently is this, that there where Israel was overthrown, and its bow broken, a victory will yet

be achieved: thither will the children of Israel and Judah gather themselves together under one king, marching up out of the country. And still the appellative significance of Jezreel may be retained; for by this victory God makes a new sowing or planting. Thus, as the threatening is connected with the names of the children, chap. i. 4 ff., so also is the promise: in the first name without any modification, in the other two by the change into their opposite by the omission of the לֹא. [The English expositors usually take the reference to be primarily to the return from the Babylonian captivity. Some of them (of whom Cowles is the latest) refer the fulfillment only to the consequences of the reign of Messiah, the "Head" chosen not only by the united children of Israel and Judah but also by the world. Henderson, denying any multiple sense in prophecy, interprets the "head" to be Zerubbabel, "because the Messiah, whom most suppose to be intended, is nowhere spoken of as appointed by men, but always as the choice and appointment of God." But (1) it is not said that they will appoint their leader to be the Messiah. That is of course God's appointment. (2.) The Messiah thus appointed must necessarily be the chosen leader of his people. It is the service of a "willing people" in which they engage. Even God always offers Himself to his people as their king. They are to choose whom they will serve. This argument is evidently only the plea of one who has a theory to uphold. As to the main application of these verses, it is probably best to regard its promise as partially and but to a very small degree fulfilled in the case of those out of the Ten Tribes who returned to Jerusalem after the Exile, and to be constantly undergoing its fulfillment in the increase of the true Israel until the "great multitude which no man could number of all nations" (the 144,000, the mystical number of those sealed of the *twelve* tribes of Israel), shall be completed. That the Messianic application is almost exclusively the true one is evident both from the grand comprehensiveness of the promise, and from the paucity of evidence as to subsequent reunion to any extent of the representatives of the two kingdoms. — M.]

Ver. 3. — **Say to your brethren, Ammi, and to your sisters, Ruhamah.** According to some the children of the Prophet are addressed. Those who had first called out to the people by their own names: Not-my-people! and Unfavored! are now to call out to them the opposite, the son to his brethren, the daughter to her sisters, that is, to the rest of the Israelites. According to others, it is the people who obtain mercy that are addressed, whose members are to salute one another with the new name bestowed on them by God (Hengstenberg, Keil, Umbreit). The latter is to be preferred. For the verse is naturally connected with the close of ver. 2, and it should therefore present the rejoicing shouts of the victors. Their victory is to them a pledge of their acceptance by God, which is to be celebrated by these joyful shouts, according to the requirement of the Prophet, or rather of God through him.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. One of the most profound conceptions of the Old Testament is that which regards the covenant relation between Jehovah and Israel as a marriage. As a consequence, Israel's idolatry and apostasy from God appear as whoredom or adultery; for idols are paramours as contrasted with Jehovah the husband.

The fundamental elements of this conception are found as early as in the Pentateuch: Ex. xxxiv. 14, 15; Lev. xvii. 7; xx. 5, 6; Num. xiv. 33; (xv. 39); Deut. xxxi. 16; xxxii. 16, 21. Ex. xxxiv. 14, 15 must be regarded as the most important and the fundamental passage.

Other passages are Judges ii. 17; viii. 33; 1 Kings xiv. 24; xv. 12; xxii. 47; 2 Kings ix. 22; xxiii. 7; 1 Chron. vi. 25; 2 Chron. xxi. 11, 13. Further in the Psalms (if we leave Ps. xlv. out of the question); Ps. lxxiii. 27; cvi. 39.

Such passages of later time, as those from Chronicles, naturally presuppose the prophetic development of this doctrine. This is found first in our Prophet, who has made that conception the fundamental idea of his discourses, in some of which it is directly discussed, while it permeates others as an essential principle (*e. g.*, in chap. xi.). On the ground of these discourses it is more fully presented by Jeremiah (especially chaps. iii.; v. 7; xiii. 27, etc.), and Ezekiel (chaps. xvi.–xxiii.). It is only hinted at in Isaiah (chaps. i. 21; liv. 5; lvii. 3; lxii. 5). It is not met with in the other prophets. For Nahum iii. 4 ff. does not belong here (although the expressions show allusions to our prophet). Nor does Is. xxiii. 16 ff.; for there it is not idolatry that is represented by the whoredom of Nineveh and Tyre. In addition, on the positive side, namely, the love of Jehovah to Israel, we must name the Song of Solomon, which bears besides, unmistakable allusions to our Prophet. In the New Testament this conception returns, naturally modified in form, in the description of the great Whore, Rev. xvii. ff. (embracing, at the same time, the ideas that are found in the last-named passages concerning great and commercial cities). But the positive notion of a marriage of Jehovah to his people is found again in a New Testament form in Eph. v. 22 ff, though there in an inverted order; for an actual marriage is first taken, and a parallel is then drawn between it and the relation of Christ to the Church.

For the meaning and significance of this whole conception of Jehovah's relation to his people, our Prophet is, according to the above remarks, the best commentator in all his writings, and especially in chap. ii. See therefore the remarks upon that chapter.

2. "God will not be mocked" is the truth which the writings of the Prophet, written in letters of flame, bear upon their front in the announcement of the destroying judgments which God must and will inflict upon his apostate people. The mode of this announcement in our chapter through the three children with symbolical names, is full of instruction. The very fact that they represent the apostate children of Israel and declare by their names the punishment for this apostasy, sets forth unmistakably the close connection between sin and guilt, namely, that punishment is, so to speak, attached to sin. And the sudden appearance of the three children without any interval expresses evidently the certainty and unavoidableness of the infliction of the divine judgment. The three symbolic names, moreover, were given for the purpose of intensifying and emphasizing the announcement of the judgment. If the first name simply presages the fact of a retribution by an overwhelming judgment, the second unveils with terrible clearness its ground in the divine nature: it is that they shall no more find compassion, that God has turned away from them. And the result

of all this is that the nation ceases to be a people of God. Thus the whole significance of this judgment is exhibited. Destruction, the cessation of mercy, might be felt by any other people or kingdom; but with the people of God its influence was different, it was to them the loss of its special prerogative. Such a judgment has therefore a significance which is not merely political or social but also theocratic, and must be inflicted with a terrible severity elsewhere unfelt.

But it is most palpably enounced in our chapter how far judgment is from being the end of God's ways toward his people. Immediately after the three strokes of destruction, so to speak, had been dealt, the sun of divine favor breaks forth from the darkest clouds of divine judgment in the brightest splendor of words of deliverance, as three names are again sounded forth each more distinctly than the former. This great transformation is presented without the least preparation, evidently as an enigma, thus exciting the greatest desire for its solution. The connecting link between these two announcements so broadly contrasted; namely, on the side of God, love, in which even his wrath against his faithless people is rooted — if He were indifferent He would not be angry, — and on the side of man, a return to Him in consequence of the chastening of his judgments, is not yet displayed here. This is done by the longer exposition given in the following chapter.

3. A man may be the instrument of God and, by his acts, execute his will, and yet be rejected: so Jehu. Our position is determined by the relation which we inwardly bear to that will, according to the simple truth that God regards the heart, whether we make the desires of God our own and are willing to be nothing but his instruments and to serve Him, or whether we assert and claim a place for our own interests, and thus in truth seek our own will and not the will of God. If we in this seek our own ends, the result is inevitable; our execution of the divine will is impeded and disturbed, if it is not rather only a seeming fulfillment and our labors abortive.

4. The New Testament conception of sonship with God, has as its Old Testament correlative that of a people of God. This places God in a close, unique relation to men. But God appears there as only Lord and King, though bestowing blessings and offering the conditions of life; and man, to whom He thus stands in relation, is not the individual but only the people of God as a whole. Therefore also this government of God has for one of its aims the restoration and preservation of the outward conditions of national existence, including the natural basis of such a community, the land itself. Under the New Covenant there is also a people of God, but the individuals, who constitute the whole, are all regarded as children of God.

But in another direction the Old Testament notion of a people of God tends undeniably towards the New Testament conception of sonship, and thus shows itself to be a germ ever developing with living power as the earnest of its fruit. All Israel appears as a son of God in the significant passage, Ex. xi. 22; comp. further Hos. xi. 1. The Israelites themselves are also called "sons of God," Deut. xiv. 1; xxxii. 19, and here in our chapter. But these are only single whispers, and the grand distinction must not be overlooked, that this expression is applied only to the totality of the people, even when it relates to their great multitude. Moreover our passage is contained in an announcement with regard to the future, and we must hold beyond question that the prophets go beyond the stand-point of the Old Covenant. It is just as Paul declares in Gal. iv. 1 ff. Israel indeed actually held the position of sonship toward God, but *ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ὁ κληρον. νήπιός ἐστιν οὐδὲν διαφέρει δούλου.* Only the incarnation of the Son of God Himself in an individual person could confer the privilege of the relation of individual and personal sonship towards God, the *υἱοθεσία* of individual personality.

5. How is the promise in chap. ii. 1–3 fulfilled? We might at first be inclined to seek the fulfillment in the return of the people from Babylonish Exile. For that event certainly marks the turning-point where God's judgment upon his people reached its end and his favor again shone upon them. But in truth we cannot yet discern the accomplishment of the prophecy in that event. It could hardly be the subject of the promise, inasmuch as the Prophet only speaks and knows here of a judgment upon the Ten Tribes. But if a return from the Assyrian Exile and a consequent reunion with the kingdom of Judah had taken place, we might expect to see in these events a fulfillment of the promise. But such a return and consequent remission of the judgment upon the kingdom of Israel never took place; and the return from the Babylonish Exile affected that kingdom but very slightly, and brought about only to a very small degree a season of deliverance. God's favor returned, indeed, inasmuch as this period was an assurance that God had not utterly rejected his people, and the hope of the fulfillment of the prophetic promises became so much the brighter. But it was not the fulfillment itself. No; to arrive at that we have only to look at our promise a little more closely.

Before the eye of the Prophet there is evidently standing here a picture of a people of Israel, not only innumerably increased and united into one kingdom, but also actually realizing the idea of a people of God ("sons of the living God"). That is, the time which he promises is in his mind directly the "time of fulfillment," which we, upon the ground of other prophecies, since Hosea himself scarcely speaks of the Messiah (not even in chap. iii. 5), must designate the Messianic. Hence we can in no case seek the fulfillment in events which transpired before the advent of the Messiah.

But now the Messiah has come in Jesus of Nazareth. Is this promise of prophecy already fulfilled? Is this picture of the future already realized? If we keep to the words of the Text we must answer, No.

In fact the coming of the Messiah did not bring for Israel, as a whole, the time of deliverance, but on account of its guilt, rather a time of rejection, and the consequence was the infliction of a new and still more complete judgment. It is quite clear also that we cannot find the fulfillment of the present promise in the acceptance of the Messiah by the comparatively few who did accept Him. Must we then say that God did indeed design for the people in the Messiah such blessings as are here promised; but that, since they rejected Him, the promised time will never be theirs? In one respect this is perfectly true. But we cannot rest satisfied with it. The prophetic promise with all its rich fullness of meaning would then simply fall to the ground.

But still more unjustifiable is the assumption that the promise is to be regarded as only sus-

pended for the people of Israel during the time of their obduracy, and to expect its fulfillment in that nation when it shall be converted to the Messiah. For this opinion, though so much favored of late, simply holds mechanically and restrictively to the letter, with a complete misconception of the nature of the Old and New Testament and their mutual relations, and of the higher plane to which divine Revelation rose with Christ, and supposes it possible that Revelation could retreat from the standpoint of the fulfillment to that of the Old Testament preparation, where Israel as a people represented the kingdom of God. It would assume also that allusion was made to the one kingdom only, for the purpose of showing that the distinction between children of Judah and children of Israel was lost by the extinction of the whole kingdom, even of the kingdom of Judah, independently of the consummation of the reunion under one head here promised. And therefore a promise which takes that division for granted and holds out the prospect of its removal and conversion into a higher unity, cannot be regarded as one whose fulfillment (according to the plain sense of the words) is still to be expected; or is that division of the two kingdoms, which no longer exist, yet to take place, in order that it may at some time be removed? If we have to give up the main position of this assumption of a literal fulfillment yet to be accomplished, on account of its intrinsic impossibility, all support is taken away from the notion that the promise will be realized in and for the people of Israel upon the soil of the Holy Land. It falls to pieces from internal weakness.

Instead, therefore, of dreaming of a future fulfillment in the literal sense, we must rather say, that the Prophet knows of a people of God only in the form of Israel, and hence what he hopes and promises for the people of God he hopes and promises for Israel, and in the form conditioned by Israel's history. But it has become clear to us under the New Testament through Christ: Israel was only a type, necessary for its time and chosen by God, of the true people of God, only a shell which contained the kernel in the mean while, but at the same time was also to protect it until the time of its maturity. But the shell was too small and must be burst; the kernel had not and has not sufficient room, and it would be reversing the order of things, after the kernel is laid bare to retain the shell. It is not the outward Israel that is God's people; it was just the period of its ruin, just the rejection of the Messiah at his coming by the external Israel that opened the way for this. It was made clear that a people as such was insufficient for this high calling, to be the chosen people of God, as the prophets themselves distinguished more and more between the mere external Israel and the true Israel, and saw the heathen coming to Zion and entering the breach. And though Israel is still held as the central point, the fulfillment is not in outward form, but ideally, inasmuch as Christ came the "Saviour of the Jews;" Israel therefore remaining the root in which the others were engrafted. We can understand now the promise of the innumerable increase (chap. ii. 1). Literally it would apply to the people of Israel, but can only apply to them as the people of God; and even though the older prophets say nothing as yet of the calling of the Gentiles, as Micah and Isaiah do, *we* have now assuredly a right to abandon the notion of an increase of the external Israel, and to see the fulfillment in the founding of a people of God by Christ just in the time of the final ruin of Israel, who have become, especially by the conversion of the heathen, a numberless multitude, and will become still more numerous. Then the reunion of the divided kingdoms is an essential element in the Messianic picture of the future held up in prophecy, as this very passage shows. This is altogether natural. Since prophecy knows a people of God only in the form of the people of Israel, it was necessary, if salvation was to be brought by the reign of the Messiah, that the breach, so harmful to God's people, and the fruitful source, even more than the consequence, of apostasy from Jehovah, should be removed. If Israel was to be described as becoming converted to God, it must also be represented as returning to its unity under the divinely chosen House of David. This element also in the promise belongs naturally to its form, the form which it must naturally assume under the Old Covenant. As in the New Testament it was declared that the outward Israel was not to constitute God's people for all time, this element lost its significance; we cannot expect a literal fulfillment of this promise, but the idea which lies at its foundation has been and is being realized, that is, the idea of the real unity of God's people under one head of the house of David, who was, however, more than the son of David, namely, under Christ. These promises have thus a higher range than the Prophet conceives, and find their fulfillment in a far higher sense than he hopes, and as they are thus more than mere human aspirations and pious wishes, they are seen to proceed from the Spirit of God, who preformed and prevised the New Covenant in the Old. So little does this view do away with the divine authority of the prophetic word, that it is rather its only real attestation and adequate expression, unlike the other literalizing view disproved above.

But if the reproach of spiritualizing should be brought against this conception, our defense is that we only spiritualize in reference to Old Testament promises, along with the Apostles, and would not be more realistic than they, who (1 Pet. ii. 10; Rom. ix. 25, 26), although fully aware of the literal sense of our passages, yet do expressly refer them to the conversion of the heathen. Peter in the same connection (ver. 9) sets the New Testament people of God, Christians, directly in the place of those of the Old Testament, and therefore the former are now the true Israel. This extension with reference to the heathen is also quite consequent. If the words: not my people, were once pronounced over Israel, it was because they had sunk quite to the level of the heathen. And if they are to be received again, they would be received just as those who had actually become like heathen; and it is no longer right to exclude the heathen, who are behind them in no respect. But there is this difference between the reacceptance and the first choice. When the Israelites were chosen they were not in positive opposition to God, but now they are so; and therefore a longer exclusion of the heathen would be a particularizing to a greater extent than their disciplinary training demanded; it would be a violation of justice. For the rest: Paul declares clearly that Israel itself shall not be excluded (Rom. xi. 26). Only thus should the people of God attain to its full increase (And surely, in the fact of the preservation of Israel in its nationality even under the New Testament, we may see a promise of this conversion, although that wonderful preservation by God's providence is to be regarded in its most patent as-

pect as a part of the judgment decreed upon Israel by God. It is preserved as a living witness of the rejection decreed by God on account of its unbelief and rejection of the Messiah.) Only Paul says not a word, when promising Israel's conversion, that would lead us to think that a people of God, κατ' ἐξοχήν, will be continued, not a word of the "glory of the kingdom of Israel," though his heart beat so warmly (comp. chap. ix.) towards his nation in its outward sense.

Finally we have only further to remark that in our references to the Messianic period inaugurated by Christ, as the time of the fulfillment of the prophetic promises, "Messianic time" is taken in the fullest sense of the term, and the whole course of the New Testament dispensation, from its foundation to its completion, is regarded as one whole, so that we have not yet attained to the perfect fulfillment, although the promises of prophecy have been undergoing their realization since the time of Christ. "For it doth not yet appear what we shall be." The fulfillment is not yet complete, but we stand in expectation of it. This perfect realization consists least in the literal fulfillment with respect to the external Israel alone, but it too, in so far as it is converted to the Messiah, will have a share in the complete salvation ready for all who will be converted to God through Christ.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 2. STARKE: All departure from God's Word and from true religion is a spiritual whoredom. Blessed are they who beware of this!

Ver. 4. STARKE: As a good intention without God's counsel does not make a cause good, so it cannot be said that the divine will has been fulfilled, when it has been executed with a perverted heart and not in accordance with the divine purposes. (Comp. the Doctrinal and Ethical section, No. 3.)

WÜRT. SUMM.: God's wrath often falls upon posterity, and they must suffer for the sins of their forefathers, if they walk in their evil footsteps (Ex. xx. 5).

TUB. BIBLE: Public sins of a whole nation or of its kings and princes are followed by a general judgment of God, by which whole lands are destroyed.

[PUSEY: So awful a thing it is to be the instrument of God in punishing or reproving others if we do not by his grace keep our own hearts and hands pure from sin. — M.]

Ver. 6. WÜRT. SUMM.: Behold here the severity of the divine wrath. God is certainly compassionate, but his compassion is regulated by his holy righteousness. His compassion exceeds all human petitions and understanding; but his wrath goes beyond all human reckoning. Men may keep on sinning against our beloved God too long, so that when He has waited long exhorting them to repentance, and they do not follow Him, his words at last are: "Lo-Ruhamah Lo-Ammi." Beware of this and do not defer your repentance; for God may soon become as angry as He was merciful.

Ver. 7. CRAMER: When human help ceases, divine help begins. He is not limited to the use of means, but is Himself our Help and Shield.

[BURROUGHS: The more immediate the hand of God appears in his mercy to his people, the more sweet and precious ought that mercy then to be. *Dulcius ex ipso fonte*. Created mercies are the most perfect mercies. — M.]

STARKE: Woe to him whose God the Lord will no longer be. Let men therefore beware lest by presumptuous sin they trifle away all intercourse with God.

RIEGER: When God thus renounces those who were his people, it is much more lamentable than any severance between those who are married or betrothed. "I will be your God and ye shall be my people," was the formula of the covenant. They had broken the last condition by their unbelief; and thus they stirred up the Lord to anger so that He renounced the first. Yet He has not expressly retracted the whole formula of the covenant. He did not say: I will not be your God, but He cut short his words in anger: I will not be yours. Thus room is left for that mercy which shall awake anew for them.

Ver. 9. The threatenings are indeed terrible: but how merciful it was in God to announce the judgment before it comes; and the plainer and more striking these threatenings are the greater the mercy. This is a ground for hoping that the judgment will be averted.

Chap. ii. ver. 1. This is the order and method of God's dealings: He slays, not that He may keep under the power of death, but that He may bring to repentance. Thus He dispersed Israel among the heathen, and without any compassion and mercy, as it seemed to outward observation, rejected them utterly. For the Ten Tribes have not yet returned to their own land. But how abundantly has God compensated to them this misfortune! For those who were scattered among the heathen, He gathered again by the Gospel, and so gathered them that a great multitude of the heathen came to the knowledge of the kingdom of Christ along with the remnant in the kingdom of Israel. He points the people of Israel to this compensation, that they may not despond in such affliction, as we also assuage, by the hope of the future glory, prepared for us by the death of Christ, the sorrows of those calamities which we see before our eyes.

[BURROUGHS: If we expect God to be a living God to us, it becomes us not to have dead hearts in his service. If God be active for our good, let us be active for his honor. — M.]

Ver. 2. STARKE: The Church of the New Testament has only one Head, who is Christ. Blessed are we if we cleave to and follow Him!

[MATTHEW HENRY: To believe in Christ is to appoint Him to ourselves for our Head, that is, to consent to God's appointment and willingly to submit to his guidance and appointment; and this in concurrence and communion with all good Christians who make Him their Head; so that though they are many, yet in Him they are one, and so become one with each other. *Qui conveniunt in aliquo tertio inter se conveniunt.* — M.].

Ver. 3. The prophet gives the best application of the names which God bade him apply to his children in order that the Christian Church may be convinced thereby that all the former things are reversed, that wrath is done away, and that the unfathomable compassion and mercy of God stand open to every man. For how should God, after He gave his son, not with Him have given all things? This word "say" belongs to the office of public preaching. We are to understand by it that the servants of God in the New Testament are commanded to comfort believers, and to declare to them that they stand in mercy and are a people of God.

[PUSEY: The words "my people" are words of

hope in prophecy; they become words of joy in each stage of fulfilment. They are words of mutual joy and gratulation when obeyed; they are words of encouragement until obeyed. God is reconciled to us, and willeth that we should be reconciled to Him. — M.].

Fuller Discourse of Jehovah Concerning His Adulterous Spouse, Israel.

Chapter II. 4–25.

A. *Complaint and Threatening of Punishment.*

Verses 4–15.

4 Plead with your mother, plead!
For she is not my wife
And I am not her husband,
That she put away her whoredom from before her
And her adultery from between her breasts.
5 Lest I strip her naked,
And place her as (she was in) the day of her birth,
And make her like the wilderness,
And set her (so as to be) like a barren land,
And slay her with hunger.
6 And on her children I will not have mercy,
For they are children of whoredom
7 Because their mother has committed whoredom
And she that bore them has caused shame,
Because she said: I will go after my lovers,
Who furnished my bread and my water,
My wool and my flax,
My oil and my (pleasant) drinks.
8 Therefore behold I am hedging up thy way with thorns,
And will wall up a wall [raise a wall before her]
And she will not find her paths.
9 And she will pursue her lovers and not overtake them
And will seek them and not find;
And she will say: I will go and return to my former husband,
For (it was) better with me then than now.
10 And she did not know that I gave her
The corn and the wine and the oil,
And that I increased for her silver and gold,
(Which) they used for Baal.
11 Therefore will I take back my corn in its time
And my wine in its season,
And snatch away my wool and my flax
(Which was) to cover her nakedness.
12 And then will I uncover her shame
In the eyes of her lovers,
And none will deliver her from my hands.
13 And I will bring to an end all her joy;
Her feast-making, her new-moons, her sabbaths,
And all her festivals.
14 And will lay waste her vine and her fig tree
Of which she said: they are my reward
Which my lovers gave to me:
And will make her a forest,
And the beast of the field will devour her.

15 And I will visit upon her the days of the Baals;
To which she burnt incense,
And (then) put on her ring and her jewels,
And went after her lovers,
And forgot me, saith Jehovah.

B. *The Punishment leads to Conversion, and thus to the glorious Renewal of the Marriage Contract between Jehovah and Israel.*

Verses 16–25.

16 Therefore, behold, I am alluring her,
And will lead her into the wilderness
And speak unto her heart [speak with comfort].
17 And I will give her her vineyards from thence,
And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope,
And she will answer then as in the days of her youth,
As in the day of her coming up from the land of Egypt.
18 And it will be in that day, saith the Lord,
Thou wilt call: My husband,
And thou wilt no more call me: My Baal.
19 And I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth,
And they shall no more be remembered by their name,
20 And I will make for them in that day a covenant
With the beast of the field,
And with the birds of heaven,
And the creeping things of the earth,
And bow and sword and war will I destroy from the land,
And make them dwell in security.
21 And I will betroth thee to me for ever,
And betroth thee to me in righteousness and justice,
And in mercy and in compassion;
22 And betroth thee to me in faithfulness,
And thou shalt know Jehovah.

23 And it will be in that day,
I will answer, saith the Lord,
Will answer the heavens,
And they will answer the earth,
24 And the earth will answer the corn and the wine and the oil,
And they will answer Jezreel [God's sowing]
25 And I will sow her for myself in the land,
And favor "Unfavored,"
And say to "Not-my-people":
"Thou art my people,"
And they shall say: "My God."

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 4.— נַאֲפוּפֶיהָ, ἅπ. λεγ. = נַאֲפִיהָ. Fürst regards it as signifying objects of idolatrous worship, therefore: little images, which are represented as being carried upon the breast. [But this is opposed to the parallel expression, זְנוּנֶיהָ, which, as Hengstenberg says, is evidently to be taken as the species (adultery) of which the other (whoredoms, acts of unchastity) is the genus. As illustrating the fitness of this picture, Manger compares Ez. xxiii. 3, and Horace, *Od.*, i., 19, 7, 8. — M.]

[[2] Ver. 8. — גְּדֵרָהּ. J. H. Michaelis and Jahn point in their editions גְּדֵרָהּ, *her wall*, and this reading, Hengstenberg assumes, without any discussion, to be correct. But there is an obvious unsuitableness in this. The wall could not be represented as being "her" wall unless it were conceived of as existing before the action on the part of Jehovah, which action was to *make* the wall. — M.]

[3 Ver. 11. — לְכַסּוֹת, (which were) to cover. Such an ellipsis is quite common The rendering of the LXX. τοῦ μὴ καλύπτειν, conveys the sense, but is not a translation. It was quite unnecessary for Newcome, Horsley, Boothroyd, and others following Houbigant, who was misled by the LXX., to change the לְ into מִ.—M.]

4 Ver. 14. — אֶתְנָה. This is usually derived from תנה, as also is the usual synonym, אֶתְנַן. Hengstenberg labors to prove the derivation of both words from נתן and its 1st fut.: a "I-will-give-thee," similar to our "forget-me-not." The absence of daghesh-forte in both nouns would seem to prove the untenableness of this hypothesis. —M.]

5 Ver. 17. — עָנְתָה. Some take this from ענה, to be bowed down, here: to be humble. But this does not suit the sense of the verse. Besides, שָׁמָּה would then = שָׁם.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This chapter is the essential supplement to chap. i. It contains, in a more discursive style, an exposition, justifying and elucidating that which in chap. i. was presented only as a theme, and in some parts even enigmatically in its brief sentences. The complaint and threatening of destroying judgments were uttered without any preparation; and still more suddenly were they followed immediately by as glorious an announcement of salvation. Chap. i. must thus excite inquiries, not so much through the symbolical representation of the first part, as by these unexpected utterances, inquiries which demand an answer. Such answer is given by the Lord Himself in chap. ii. 4 ff., in a longer discourse. This is now altogether based upon the conception of Israel as an unchaste wife, which was only indicated in chap. i. and then disappeared, and is developed in two sections, of threatening and of promise. A complaint is first raised against the unchaste wife, and then the course of punishment is figuratively described, which, however, is seen to be really a chastening with the view to conversion from idolatry. This conversion itself is promised, and the way thus prepared for the announcement of salvation. Israel, returning as penitently as a wife to her husband, finds mercy with God. So the close, ver. 24 f., returns expressly to chap. i.–ii. 3, and the discourse is thus shown to be most closely connected with that section.

The complaint and announcement of punishment occupy vers. 4–15. The discourse takes a turn with ver. 16. The declaration of deliverance is introduced by the announcement of conversion, and from ver. 20 onwards becomes a glorious promise.

A. Vers. 4–15. *Complaint, and Announcement of Punishment.*

Vers. 4–6. **Plead with your mother — for they are children of whoredom.** The person who makes the demand is naturally Jehovah. Those who are addressed are not the children of the Prophet, chap. i. 4 ff. (Kurtz), but the children of the adulterous spouse, Israel (and therefore those who are designated children of whoredom, chap. i. 2). These children are distinguished ideally from their mother, because Israel is from one point of view regarded as the spouse. Israel viewed as a unit is the mother: the children then represent the individual Israelites (the mother can not be conceived as existing without the children). The children are now to plead with their mother. But this does not mean that a part of Israel did not serve idols, so that the better disposed among the people would be addressed (Keil, *et al.*). This would conflict with what has been said of the relation between the mother and the children. The children are conceived of as those who have to dread misfortune on account of the prevailing "whoredom." They, in fact, however, represent just what the mother does; they are to suffer the same punishment with her, though in ver. 6 the punishment is as yet only mentioned expressly as that about to fall upon the children. But the distinction made between the mother and the children is only a rhetorical mode of presentation resorted to for the purpose of casting upon the mother, through the children, the reproach that she by her conduct was bringing misfortune upon them, and thus persuading her to abandon her lewdness. Not as though the children had acted differently from the mother, but now when the punishment is to be presented, the complaint is naturally directed against the latter. For if the children have sinned, they have followed their mother in doing so. She is the really guilty one in this punishment. The children are comparatively innocent, and have been only seduced, and yet they must suffer like their mother! And then they must participate in the sufferings which the mother endures for her own sins. They are therefore the ones who should be represented as pleading with the mother. This mode of representation is not pursued beyond the beginning of the chapter. **For she is not my wife,** expresses well the sin of the mother. It is as though Jehovah had said: "It is her sin that she deports herself as one who could not be my wife, and whose husband I could not be, and I cannot look upon myself any more as her husband." The next member of the verse shows the cause of this feeling, for it is the conduct of the mother that gives occasion to the children to upbraid her. The punishment would be: I know her no longer as my wife, and will be her husband no longer. But punishment is not introduced before ver. 5 — וְתָסֵר. The רִיב involves the demand to cease from the present conduct. This conduct is "whoredom," but in the case of a wife it is also more, it is "adultery." **From her face — from between her breasts.** The whoredom (idolatry) of Israel is thus not secret, but is done openly. Israel is like a public barefaced whore, who displays her profession in her face and (bared) breasts.

Ver. 5. The demand is supported by calling attention to the punishment. **Lest I strip her naked.** This is perhaps connected with the foregoing so as to = as a punishment for the shameless exposure of her person which she wantonly practices, strip her bare in a way she does not like and of which she would be ashamed. Divested of the figure the expression would mean: lest I take from her everything that I have given her and reduce her to the condition in which she was before I delivered her and made her what she now is (comp. Ezek. xvi. 4 ff.) The prophet now turns to this earlier condition with the words: **as in the day of her birth.** Primarily this is an image of nakedness = like a new-born child, but not sim-

ply = without clothing, but = divested of everything, stripped of all she can call her own. Thus was Israel on the day of its birth. This birth took place when Israel was chosen to be the people of God. According to chap. xi. 1, this was done in Egypt. Israel was there naked, for it dwelt as an oppressed nation of slaves without a country. **And make her like a wilderness,** that is, reduce her to a situation where the necessaries of life are wanting as they are to those in a desert, so that they die of hunger; and like a parched land, that is, a place in which there is no water, so that she may "die of thirst." This dying of thirst is only mentioned because her situation is compared to a desert; and the general sense is = reduce her to a situation of utter destitution from a condition of great abundance. A reference to Israel's sojourn in the desert cannot be well disproved (as by Keil) along with the mention of the day of her birth. Israel, it is true, was supplied with food and water by God. But the desert itself had neither food nor drink, as Israel felt only too keenly. And that desert is an image of the condition to which Israel is to be reduced by God.

Ver. 6. **And will not have compassion upon her children.** This verse is in sense still dependent upon פֶּן of ver. 5. The want of compassion is a consequence of the conduct of the mother, but may be turned away by conversion. Even the children shall share the same lot, that is, all individually; none are to suppose that they shall escape punishment, — **for they are children of whoredom.** Because they are begotten of whoredom and also witnesses of it, the Lord who is to punish his adulterous spouse cannot endure them. Still the question of chap. i. 2 repeats itself here, whether בְּנֵי זְנ׳ are not rather: children who commit whoredom. This is most natural, for the children are in fact identical with the mother.

Vers. 7–9. Because their mother hath **practiced whoredom — it was better with me then than now.** The last explanation given of בְּנֵי זְנ׳ would certainly be incorrect if ver. 7 were an explanation of ver. 6 *b* = They are children of whoredom, for their mother, etc. But such an explanation, continued too in the parallelism (ver. 7 *a*, and *b*), would make the sense extremely prolix. The same remark would apply if the verse were coördinate to ver. 6 *b*, and supported it along with ver. 6 *a*. Besides, this expression concerning the mother's sin would not be appropriate as justifying the punishment threatened against the children. The solution is to be found in the wider scope of ver. 7. For here the thought is so enlarged that it cannot be regarded simply as an explanation of ver. 6, and at the same time coördinate to the second member of that verse. Such a view supposes that if that verse is an explanation, ver. 7 must be so also. The thought is, however, evidently an independent one. Nor does it refer backwards, but, as its contents show, it reaches forward and is therefore rather to be connected with vers. 8, 9. (So Meier; even the Vulgate and Luther have detached it from ver. 6.) [So also Henderson, and Cowles in his exposition though not in his translation. — M.] — הוֹבִישָׁה here not = to become a disgrace, but = to commit shame. Luther: conduct herself shamefully. — **Who gave my bread,** etc. = food, clothing, and the enjoyments of life (Keil), comp. Jer. xliv. 17 ff. We may refer this to a condition of things which actually prevailed in Israel (comp. also ver. 16). If it did exist along with idolatry, it would be naturally suggested that it was due to the idols. In the figurative representation it is the reward which the adulteress received from her paramours (comp. ver. 14). [Keil: "This delusive idea entertained by the wife arose from the sight of the heathen nations round about, who were rich and mighty, and attributed this to their gods." — M.]

Ver. 8. **Therefore behold, I hedge up her way with thorns.** The hedging up of the way, strengthened in the parallel member by the figure of raising up a wall, means in general to place an obstacle in the way, to set up a wall of separation, and that evidently between the wife and the paramours, Israel and the idols, so that the alliance between them will be dissolved. This is shown further by the words: and she will not find the path to them, and also in ver. 9. This *causa dirimens* is here intentionally referred to only in a general way, in a sort of enigmatical allusion. The "that" is expressed only once with its immediate sequence in ver. 9. The "how" does not appear till ver. 11 ff. It is already hinted at in the conclusion of ver. 9. It is the feeling of distress in strong contrast to the situation just extolled so highly as the gift of the idols. This privation must itself excite doubts as to the power of the idols, and still more must their impotence in the midst of her distress. Israel would indeed become at first more ardent in its worship of idols; to "pursue" after them, etc., the more their prosperity was regarded as their gift, the more would they be missed. But "she will not reach them and will not find them." It is represented, as though outwardly it were no longer possible to hold intercouse with the idols. This mode of representation, however, is connected only with the image of raising a hedge, etc., something which effects an external separation. But the expression is very suitable, especially as the idols denoted by the paramours, prove themselves to be a mere phantom, dead nothings, just when men turn to them for help. They are therefore really not found. Such experience of the nothingness of idols then awakens again a longing after Jehovah as the One, in whom alone help is to be found, a longing after the good bestowed by Him upon his people. The discourse here is just ready to pass over into the thought that this punishment is a chastening to lead to conversion (vers. 16 ff.), but upon the mention of former prosperity, it turns again to complaint, in order to complete the announcement of the punishment merited by the ungrateful forgetfulness of the giver of such prosperity. This is continued till ver. 15. [Hengstenberg: "There can be no doubt, that by the hedging and walling about, severe sufferings are intended, by which the people are encompassed, straitened, and hindered in every free movement. For sufferings appear constantly as the specific against Israel's apostasy from God. . . . We can by no means think of an external obstacle. Outwardly there was, during the exile, and in the midst of idolatrous nations, a stronger temptation to idolatry than they had in their native land. Hence we can think of an internal obstacle only, and then again, only of an absolute incapacity of the idols to grant to the people consolation and relief in their sufferings. If this incapacity is first ascertained by experience, men lose their confidence in them, and seek help where alone it is to found." — M.]

Vers. 10–12. **She knew not, etc.** The refer-

ence is to ver. 7. Israel had shamefully ascribed to the idols what they owed to God. That God was the Giver they must have been inwardly conscious, in fact could have known it from the Law; but they ignored this truth, denied it, and naturally so, because they had departed from their God. The abundance of the natural productions of the country then led to an abundance of silver and gold, but—cutting reproach—that which they owed to God עָשׂוּ לַבַּעַל, probably; they employed it for Baal, not: they made it a Baal, as the article especially shows. "Employed," partly in making idol images, partly in the service of idols. *Baal* may be taken here for idols generally, since the actual Baal-worship was done away with by Jehu, though not entirely, comp. 2 Kings xiii. 6 (Keil).

Ver. 11. Now the punishment is expressed which was in vers. 8, 9, only hinted at, the withdrawal of the good things which had been so enjoyed. **My corn** = the corn which they received from me. **In its time**, that is, the season when corn and wine are expected. Hence the absence of them was the more distressing, but also more significant and striking, showing itself to be a punishment from God. Since He was not acknowledged as the Giver when He gave them, He will manifest Himself more clearly as such in taking them away. **Which was to cover her nakedness.** The resulting want should be complete, its consequence ignominious bareness = utter destitution. **And then will I uncover her shame.** = her lovers (idols) shall also look upon her nakedness to her disgrace. She would become so miserable, that even they shall despise her, though she once held herself so highly with them.

Vers. 13–15. **And I will bring to an end all her joy**, etc. A still more definite indication of the punishment before threatened. All joy must cease. But joy culminates, and has its purest expression in the festivals, the yearly feasts, strictly speaking. חַג. Upon these follows the monthly feast, that of the new moon, and the weekly one, that of the Sabbath. כָּל־מוֹעֲדָהּ then gathers all these up in one general expression. Even during the prevalence of idolatry the feast-days probably remained outwardly the same as before.

Ver. 14. The devastation mentioned here is probably intended to follow up the cessation of joy; for the vine and the fig tree are the finest productions of Canaan, not necessary to the support of life, but affording the choicest delicacies (comp. Joel i. 7–12). [Henderson: "These nouns are to be taken as collectives, or rather, as Horsley suggests, as plantations of vines and fig trees. These should be left uncultivated on the removal of the inhabitants to a foreign region, comp. Is. v. 6; vii. 23, 24.—M.]

Ver. 15. **And will visit upon her the days of Baal**, that is, the feast-days just mentioned, for they were celebrated in honor of Baal, and not of Jehovah. **And put on her ring**, etc. This is an expression which in its strictness belongs only to the image; for Israel is compared to a coquettish prostitute, who is in the habit of thus adorning herself. Yet there may be allusion to the festal attire worn at the idol-feasts. **And forgot me.** A sharp and mournful contrast to the vain adornments of the prostitute. For the sake of the paramours she was never weary of decking herself out; but no more thought of Jehovah. It is plain how completely this whole threatening was fulfilled by the Assyrian invasion. Yet it is to be observed that this itself is not threatened here, and still less banishment. In general, no enemy is yet named, at least none definitely, but only the laying waste of the land. [Henderson: "Their entirely abandoning themselves to the service of idols, and their dereliction from the God of their fathers, are brought forward at the conclusion of this description of their conduct, in order to heighten the aggravation of their guilt, and render the announcement of the kindly disposition of Jehovah toward them, at the beginning of the following verse, the more surprising."—M.]

B. *Announcement of the Conversion of Israel and the beneficent Renewal of the Covenant.*

Vers. 16–19. **Therefore behold I will allure her**, etc. לָכֵן. We have had this word twice already in a similar construction (vers. 8 and 11) with the sense: because Israel has transgressed, therefore God will punish them. לכן also here naturally means: therefore. Every other explanation, such as *veruntamen*, or *profecto*, is arbitrary, and has arisen from the embarrassment occasioned by the difficulty which a "therefore" causes in this connection; for it is not clear from what a conclusion is drawn, whether from their sin or from their punishment or from their sudden desire to return (ver. 9). Nor is it clear what conclusion is drawn, whether punishment or a display of love. As regards the first question it is to be observed that the mention of Israel's sin immediately precedes (ver. 15 at the end), while their punishment had been previously described, whose converting influence ver. 9 had already indicated. The expression: I will allure her, might certainly form a contrast to the words: she forgot me = while she forgets me, I am mindful of her and recall her to my thoughts. But the whole can hardly be merely an inference from what is said at the close of ver. 15, for the reference to the sin is there only incidental and subordinate to the description of the punishment. לכן therefore draws an inference not from Israel's sin in itself, but from that sin as being punished, and punished not without severity, as was before plainly stated. Hence we find that לכן introduces a conclusion drawn from the contents of the whole preceding section = therefore because Israel has been punished for her sin and forgetfulness of me, and has been so reduced to a condition of distress that she longs after happiness in communion with me, I will allure her, etc. This reference to the whole of the preceding is certainly justified in our verse, since the discourse evidently takes here a new direction. If this is the sense of לכן, the conclusion which is drawn is not an announcement of punishment, against which the expression, "I will allure her" is decisive, but an exhibition of love, and yet such a display as is virtually determined by the sin that is punished, and which is connected immediately with the punishment, in order to foster those first motions of longing into a steadfast resolution to return. [Pocock, Newcome, Noyes, and Henderson translate: nevertheless, notwithstanding. They failed to discern the inner connection between the passages divided by this particle, which, in fact, never has the meaning they assign to it. Cowles reaches the right conclusion, though not upon exegetical grounds: "Some have found a difficulty here, inasmuch as the grievous sins of Israel seem to be no natural reason for giving the blessings hereafter promised. But the reasons,

viewed fundamentally, lie deeper than the sins of Israel, even in God's covenant love and faithfulness. He cannot bear that his own Israel should sink hopelessly under her sins into ruin. Therefore his pity moves Him to discipline and to mercy." So also Pusey with most of the German Expositors. — M.] **And lead her into the desert**: not as a punishment, for the allusion is to the leading of the children of Israel into the desert by Moses (comp. ver. 17). But this was really a deliverance, namely, from the afflictions of Egypt. At first it is such only negatively, implying that they will no longer continue in such distress. They are not yet in Canaan. Even the desert brought want and destitution with it: and this is brought first into view here. In so far the situation indicated by the leading into the desert coincides actually and outwardly with the punishment by affliction and calamity pictured in ver. 11 (the "wilderness" is the realization of that which is threatened in vers. 11 ff.). But this situation is presented here also under another point of view, namely (as being compared with the wanderers in the desert under Moses), that of a situation while surrounded with affliction yet leading in truth to deliverance, and the idea of punishment is thereby converted into that of chastisement. For the destitution felt in the desert meant here had its definite disciplinary aim, — to shut up the people to the discovery of their need of help, and to lead them to faith in God through the help and gracious guidance which they then experienced. Thus they in the desert, even though encompassed with need, were still upon the way to Canaan, the land of blessings, and salvation. This is made plain from what follows: **And speak to her heart** = comfort her (comp. *e. g.* Gen. xxxiv. 3; l. 21; Is. xl. 2). These words imply an inward consolation by manifestations of love which immediately follow — the blessings that were withdrawn are again supplied.

Ver. 17. **And I will give her her vineyards from thence** = from the desert, so that they, as soon as they shall have passed the limits of Canaan, shall receive them, that is, the vineyards which Israel once possessed but had lost (ver. 14), therefore: her vineyards. What happened once is a type of that which shall happen again. **And the Valley of Achor for a door of hope.** The Valley of Achor here comes into view: (1) on account of its appellative signification: valley of trouble, affliction (Is. vii. 25). This shall be made a gate of hope (a valley = a natural gate): therefore a transformation of mourning into joy; (2) but also on account of its position near the border of Canaan. For Israel is conceived of as marching out of the desert into Canaan. It remains a question whether the occasion of the name is also to be taken into account. In this valley the anger of God was appeased by the stoning of Achan, and was removed from Israel to give place to renewed favor. Through that which then happened to Achan, this valley became a door of hope to Israel, which lay exposed to the anger of God. And this again sets forth the thought that punishment, affliction, shall become to them the way to renewed favor. The conception is more profound than if it merely set forth a change from one situation to another. But the image and the thing represented are not exact counterparts. Here Israel is the party who is punished and is again to find favor. But there Israel finds favor through the punishment of a single individual. [Hengstenberg: "The people when they entered into Canaan were immediately deprived of the favor of God by the transgression of an individual — Achan, — which was only a single fruit from the tree of the sin which was common to all. But God himself in his mercy made known the means by which his lost favor might be regained; and thus the place which seemed to be the door of destruction became the door of hope. . . . This particular dealing of God, however, is based upon his nature, and must therefore repeat itself when Israel again comes into similar circumstances." — M.]

And she shall shout aloud thither. The Lord comes to meet Israel (comp. ver. 16: shall comfort her); and Israel cries out towards the place whence he comes forth, looking back to the מִשָּׁם. The meaning is, that with thankful acknowledgments she accepts these tokens of his love; not only receives them but answers to them by suitable conduct. Others suppose that עָנָה means here: to be afflicted, or to be humbled. But such a sense is unsuitable in this verse. Besides, שָׁמָּה would be equal to simple שָׁם. [The view given above as to the meaning of this clause, and adopted by most of the German expositors, is defended at length by Hengstenberg, and is probably the correct one. All the English expositors, on the other hand, follow the old explanation which translates the verb: to sing, and see a special allusion to the song of Miriam and the Israelites after the crossing of the Red Sea. The chief arguments in favor of the former view are, (1.) The greater fitness of the idea of "answering," as exhibiting a change of character in the Israelites and their readiness to turn to God. Singing would merely indicate that their distress was removed, which was not the ultimate object of God's dealing with them. (2.) The meaning, "answering," is the leading usage of the *Kal*; that of singing is proper to the *Piel*. (3.) שָׁמָּה ought to be rendered "thither," which suits the idea of answering, especially as explained above, but not that of singing. — M.] **As on the day,** etc. Perhaps there is an allusion here to the song of Moses (Ex. xv.), in which Israel gave a grateful answer to the deliverance which God had wrought for them. ענתה would then be rendered directly: sing. So the Vulgate and Luther (comp. 1 Sam. xviii. 7; xxi. 11; xxix. 5, to strike up a responsive song). Yet the general signification is probably to be preferred.

Ver. 18 is then attached to this ענתה. **My husband.** That is, she will recognize in Jehovah her true spouse, regard Baal no longer as combined with God, thus (by a convenient *escamotage* so natural to the human heart which becomes inwardly apostate from God) to all appearance calling upon Jehovah, but really putting Baal in his place and thus dispossessing Him.

Ver. 19. **And I will remove the name of Baal from her mouth** = I will so act that thou shalt not take the name of the idols into thy mouth any longer, that is, shalt not honor them (for as long as they are honored they are taken into the mouth, are thought of), but wilt depart from them entirely, have nothing more to do with them. The promise is a literal fulfillment of Ex. xxiii. 13; (comp. also Zech. xiii. 2), and expressed in the same words.

Vers. 20–22. **And I will make a covenant for them in that day, etc.** A covenant for them, in their interest, so that they shall suffer no injury. Observe here how the figure of the woman as ad-

dressed is here departed from, only to be returned to in the next verse. The covenant with the wild beasts lays upon them the obligation not to injure mankind, and especially not to lay waste the land. That punishment was threatened for the immediate future (comp ver. 14). Just for that reason it is now promised to the converted and favored people that they shall be defended from it. [Keil: "The three classes of animals that are dangerous to men are mentioned here, as in Gen. ix. 2. Beasts of the field as distinguished from the domestic animals (*behemoth* are beasts that live in freedom in the fields, either wild beasts, or game that devours or injures the fruits of the field). By the fowls of heaven, we are to understand chiefly the birds of prey. *Remes* does not mean reptiles, but active creatures, the smaller animals of the earth which move about swiftly." — M.] **And I will break bow and sword and war.** To break the weapons of war means to cause war to cease forever. This is expressly intimated in what is attached here by a zeugma. To break war in pieces, — to break bow and sword, and so to put an end to war. The whole is the fulfillment of Lev. xxvi. 3 ff.; comp. Is. ii. 4; xi. 6 ff.; xxxv. 9; Zech. ix. 10; Ezek. xxxiv. 25 ff. And not merely will a condition of security and peace be afforded, but also that after which Israel longs (ver. 18) will be given, namely, intercourse with God. Upon this alone is Israel's renewed prosperity based.

And I will betroth thee to me forever. A new marriage-contract is to be signed. Israel now converted, becomes altogether different, is regarded again as an unstained virgin, and is betrothed by God to Himself. What formerly existed, that she was once a faithless spouse, is left quite out of sight. For אֵרַשׂ means: to woo a maiden, to betroth her. The words, "I will betroth her," are thrice repeated, to take all doubt away from the statement. This covenant is now to last forever without any interruption — in righteousness and justice, in mercy and compassion. We are evidently to understand here the righteousness which is displayed in Jehovah's appearing to favor his people and defending their cause against their enemies, from whose power he delivers them. Such righteousness and judgment are, with relation to the enemies, only negative, that is, they are displayed in punishing them; but, with relation to God's people, positive, so that righteousness really bears the sense of salvation, deliverance. In so far Luther is right, when he holds that such righteousness is the imputed righteousness of Christ. For there is certainly presented the notion of God's intervention to bestow favor upon man, and therefore of an act of justification, only not at first as connected with the accusings of conscience by reason of guilt, but in relation to God's punitive judgments against sin. These, so to speak, lose the right to destroy God's people any longer, because they are accepted by Him as converted. Keil explains the words as meaning, the righteous judgment by which God purifies his people, in order to eradicate everything which, on the side of the Church, could do prejudice to the covenant. But the discourse has already passed beyond this. The judgment has been already inflicted, and we are now upon the ground of the complete promises of salvation, when God no more appears against his people, but interferes in their behalf in accordance with the purification which has been effected. The disposition of mind in God represented by this righteousness and judgment is still further brought out by the two words: in mercy and compassion. Every idea of an intervention of God in his people's behalf upon the ground of their merit is thus excluded. What God exercises towards them is purely favor and compassion.

Ver. 22. But these shall never cease. Hence the addition: **in faithfulness.** Only thus does this engagement receive the pledge of its eternal duration, while by the preceding generally the possibility of its ratification is set forth. Righteousness and judgment, favor and compassion, are the *conditio sine qua non* and *causa efficiens;* faithfulness is the essential *modus* of the engagement. The end then is: **And thou shalt know Jehovah.** No interruption of such relation shall ever intervene between Jehovah and Israel; upon the establishment of such intercourse, a true knowledge of God will be imparted. This naturally does not mean a mere cognition of God, least of all a mere logical conception of Him, — in general, not a mere intellectual relation to Him based upon the operations of the understanding, but a personal living relation, that deeper notion which is certainly sometimes conveyed by יָדַע.

Vers. 23-25. **And it will be on that day that I will answer,** etc. The consequence of the covenant newly ratified is the readiness of God to bless his people most richly. The betrothal having been accomplished, the marriage presents are not wanting, and heaven and earth, standing in the service of the bridegroom and husband, must contribute their share. The heavens, etc., in a descending series, are represented as earnestly asking the personified objects above them respectively whether the blessing which they expect is to be dispensed. The heavens ask Jehovah, the earth the heavens, etc., or they look towards them with longing. And now this questioning, this earnest request (in the time of Israel's rejection) is "answered" cordially and assuringly. In how far, however, this original sense of ענה is carried out, or whether it does not pass over into the signification of our "agree with" = comply, listen to, cannot be definitely shown. It is, however, in accordance with the largely poetical conception to assume here a strict prosopopœia. The first object of the representation is Jehovah; therefore the sense of the whole naturally is, that Jehovah, upon whom all blessing depends, will confer upon his Church the blessings He had withdrawn from it (comp. Deut. xxviii. 12 and the contrast, Deut. xxviii. 23 f.; Lev. xxvi. 19). [Keil: "By prosopopœia the prophet represents the heavens as praying to God, to allow it to give to the earth that which will insure its fertility, whereupon the heavens fulfill the desires of the earth, and the earth yields its produce to the nation." Umbreit: "It is as though we heard the exalted harmonies of the united powers of creation sending forth their notes as they are sustained and moved by the eternal key-note of the creative and moulding Spirit." Henderson compares the personification in Tibullus, I., Eleg. vii. 25. The extreme beauty of the figure here has often been praised. — M.] **Will answer Jezreel.** The name Jezreel is here used unexpectedly instead of Israel. The same name which symbolized the judgment upon Israel (i. 4) is here employed directly to designate the favored people according to its appellative significance: God will sow, especially as in chap. ii. 2 the hope of victory was connected with Jezreel. Israel appears as the sowing of God, because planted anew by divine grace, as ver. 25 shows immediately. Thus the first name of evil

omen is taken away and converted into its opposite. The same is true of the other two names. Israel will again be called "Favored," and the "People of God," because it is his. It is therefore said, beautifully completing the picture, that the people again know God as their God. Thus God's renewed favor, and the people's new heart, go hand in hand. On the fulfillment of the promise, see the Doctrinal Section, No. 4.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The whole tenor of our chapter presupposes that Jehovah's relation to Israel as his people is compared to a marriage. If we seek the *tertium comparationis* in this comparison, it is manifest upon a general view, that everything of an accidental or external nature is denied of this relation, that it is presented as a union inward, sacred, and indissoluble, involving indefeasible rights and obligations. But, more especially, there are two elements entering into the nature of marriage, which form the points of comparison, namely, love, by which the husband is bound to the wife, and its correlative the requirement of fidelity, or of exclusive reciprocal affection, which He makes of her. Hence the relation of Jehovah to his people is compared to a marriage because his love to Israel is as strong and intimate as that of a husband to his wife. As the husband chooses the wife from love, and perhaps, urged by love, takes a poor maiden and raises her to himself, and in his married life attests his affection by being her protector and benefactor who cannot show her too many evidences of his devotion, so is it with Jehovah towards his people (comp. vers. 10, 23, 24). Such love on the part of the husband must have as its correlative on the part of the wife, fidelity, undivided, exclusive affection. As certainly as the husband should expect this fidelity from his wife, so certainly shall Jehovah expect it from Israel; as strongly as the wife is bound to love him to the exclusion of all others, and as she does basely violate this duty by attaching herself to another, the same is true of the relation of Israel, God's people, to Jehovah. But if unfaithfulness on the part of the wife is a violation of duty, it is also worthy of punishment. And if the punishment (rejection) of an unfaithful, adulterous wife is justifiable, so also is the punishment (rejection) of God's faithless people. But this is only a chastisement wrung from love, and the source of deep anguish to the loving husband. Therefore the husband who loves his wife truly, with a love answering to the idea of marriage, while angry at her infidelity and employing the most severe means to punish it, only does so in order if possible to bring her back to her duty and as the only way to continue the alliance. Thus is it with Jehovah towards Israel. As his love has established the covenant with Israel, and displayed itself in it, so does it seek with its whole strength to preserve it unbroken through all interruptions, —in other words, to restore it.

2. The exhibition of God's relation to his people under the figure of a marriage permits us, on the other hand, to draw an inference as to the nature of the marriage itself. Such an exalted and sacred relation could only be thus represented under an exalted view of marriage. The lively, strong, unchangeable love of God to his people, and the demand of an unchangeable fidelity answering to such love, and turning aside to no other object, is the subject of the representation. This marriage is necessarily conceived of as a relation constituted by such love on the part of the husband and such fidelity on the part of the wife. Without these it is not contracted; where these are wanting or cease to exist, it is shaken to its foundation. The husband cleaves in love to his wife and to none other: true marriage is in its very nature monogamic; the wife must in fidelity belong to this husband and to none other.

How severe is thus the condemnation of all actual adultery, and of all unchastity as the source of adultery, as read in the strong complaints against Israel as the unfaithful wife! What a spirit of moral purity and of chastity is expressed here! We find here already just the view of marriage, and, on the other side, of adultery and whoredom, which meets us in the New Testament, *e. g.*, in the writings of Paul. The prophet know no better image than that of marriage to set forth the depth and sacredness of Jehovah's relation to Israel, and the Apostle knows no better image than the relation of Christ to his Church to set forth the depth and sacredness of the marriage union.

3. "She knew not that I gave her," etc. This is perpetually repeated. God blesses men with good things—undeservedly, even when they do not serve Him but "idols." But they do not know that it is his hand from which they receive everything. It is just the superabundance of his gifts, that makes them so self-exalted and completely forgetful of Him. God must then change this abundance into want, and make presumptuous men feel their own impotence. And how deeply God can humble men! Such visitations are then the means by which God draws them again to Himself, teaches them to know Him, how unjust and at the same time how foolish is their apostasy from Him, how little their "idols" can help them, rather how ill they reward them; and how good it is, on the other hand, to abide by the service of the true God ("it was better with me then than now"). The fruit of such knowledge by humiliation is then the abandonment of idols and a turning to God.

4. That Hosea reverts with special fondness to the ancient history of Israel was already remarked in § 2 of the Introduction, and there shown to be connected with the fundamental idea of his prophetic discourses. In the later chapters (from the ninth onwards) this is specially apparent: but it is also found in our chapter, and thus in the earlier portion of his writings. In this he chiefly takes up the great deeds by which God manifested Himself to the fathers,—the exodus from Egypt, the journey through the Desert, the entrance into the Promised Land. These were the great fundamental acts of God in behalf of Israel, and were most deeply impressed upon the consciousness of the people; for they owed to these their very existence as his people, so that they could never forget them, not even in the season of their greatest decline. Prophetic discourse has in them therefore a sure, unassailable foundation upon which to take its stand. It can point out to the present, in a manner not to be resisted, the dealings of God in his specific relation to Israel his people, can draw from thence its most forcible arguments for its warning and chastening, as well as for its comfort and promises. It has been an advantage which it well understands and knows well how to use.

Special stress is in our chapter laid upon the journey through the desert as upon a season of great significance for Israel. Israel was in the wilderness: the milk and honey of the Promised

Land were not yet; the flesh-pots of Egypt were no more. In the latter respect this season was one of deprivation and of want, and apparently of loss. But this was only apparent; for in reality it was not only a deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, which had both outwardly and inwardly injured the people, but God could draw so much nearer to the people spiritually as they were now reduced to corporeal distress, and attest and reveal Himself to them by his helpful and blessed mercy. It was just here that God concluded his covenant with Israel and made them his people, so that their real gain outweighed their apparent loss; and the people to whom God betrothed Himself was or became the people which found itself upon the way to the Promised Land. So the Prophet sees in the profound and fruitful significance of this journey, or rather of this leading through the Desert, a type of the blessing which a removal into the desert as a chastening would convey to the people who had become unfaithful to their God. They are deprived of their possessions, but so only stripped of the prosperity which had made them forgetful of God, and which was therefore an evil. And now when they have these no longer, and are thus freed from the fetters which have bound them spiritually, when, by foreign influences, so to speak, they are brought face to face with God, He has again free access to them; the time has come when God can again betroth Himself to the people who again return to Him, lead them again into the Promised Land, and restore them to a state of renewed prosperity and of richest blessing.

Those then who were led forth into the Desert did not realize the object of that experience. Nor was it individuals whom it was to profit, but the people as such. For them the journey through the wilderness was a season of trial in which they were being prepared to become God's people, who should take possession of the Promised Land. And so in the sense of the prophetic promise the individuals who should suffer the judgment of devastation were not the same as those for whom the day of the new salvation was to break forth. That was to be a new generation. But the people were still the same, in the sense to be stated more clearly immediately.

5. With regard to the promise of our chapter and its fulfillment, the remark made in chap. i. applies, namely, (*a*.) The fulfillment is not to be seen in the return of the Jews from the exile. This was, to be sure, a fulfillment, but only a small and feeble beginning. For the promise is to be regarded as essentially Messianic. And therefore we Christians, if to us the truth is fully and differently realized that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah, must hold that this promise has found its fulfillment in Christ, and still finds it in Him; that is, in Christ the new "betrothal" of God to his people has already taken place; but the great salvation which is involved in this is as yet only partially realized, the completion is yet to come. The people of God are still marching through the desert; in Christ we are upon the sure way to the Promised Land, but that goal is not yet reached. (*b*.) Israel, to whom salvation is here promised by the Prophet, comes into view, not according to its natural nationality, but according to its divine destiny, or according to its typical significance as the *People of God*. They cannot perish beneath any judgment: for them a new day of salvation is waiting. But as this salvation is conditioned upon the coming of the Messiah, and we know clearly that the Messianic salvation is and shall be universal, so we are forbidden to restrict this great promised day of salvation to the external Israel, although the Prophet undeniably speaks of it, — Israel and God's people being as yet to him essentially one,— and must extend it to the people of God generally, therefore to all believers, believers of Israel together with those of the Gentiles incorporated into the ancient Church, which must ever remain the parent stem. To Israel, who had become "Not-my-people," many of the heathen who had been "Not-my-people" will unite themselves, and to them, to this whole complex "Not-my-people," will God say: "Thou art my people:" and they will say: "My God." So clearly and truly has Paul shown that the Gentiles must first become what Israel was, and that they shall and will really become so, that they shall actually overshadow Israel and so repair what they had lost. If these promises have not found and still do not find their fulfillment in the literal interpretation of what is said of Israel, it is clear that it is not a literal fulfillment of their contents, which speak of temporal blessings in the Holy Land, that is to be expected. Such limited blessings are inseparably connected with the limited range of application; but if the latter, the restriction to Israel, is only the shell and not the kernel, so is it with the former.

When the people of God were embodied in a nation, under the Old Testament, the possession of a definite country as the inheritance assigned them by God was something essential, and therefore, as the desolation of the country was a token of the Divine anger, so its fruitfulness, or in general a state of temporal prosperity, was necessarily an indication of the Divine favor. And so the temporal blessings predicted by the Prophet are the tokens of acceptance, of the returning favor of God. The latter, however, the return of favor, is the main element, the kernel which remains after the husk is stripped off. Yet the favor of God manifests itself still under the New Covenant in temporal blessings, while his wrath is declared in temporal punishments. But it does not need to be shown that the complete abandonment of the notion of a national and local settlement in a definite country, as belonging to the conception of a people of God, went further than this; that the New Covenant opens up a prospect of spiritual and inward blessings and enjoyments of which the former were only a thin shadow; and, in spite of this, to insist upon the literal sense is to beat in the face of the New Covenant, and to deny to the prophetic promises generally their lasting significance. For the legitimate consequence of such a theory is to declare that these are not and never shall be fulfilled; it is not simply to dream of a fulfillment expected still in the millennium, and to transfer to this epoch, which is not described any more definitely in the Apocalypse, conditions for which it is felt that room can be found nowhere else.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

GOD'S testimony against this apostate people: (1) threatening them with severe judgment; (2) and yet alluring them back with glorious promises.—The judgments of God, (1) invoked only by faithless apostasy from Him and base disowning of his favor; (2) aiming only at the complete conversion of the apostate and the joyful acceptance of the converted.

Ver. 4. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: Believers are bound to warn in love their brothers, sisters, or

parents, who are remiss in the practice of true religion, and to bring them to the right way.

Ver. 7. God is the real Giver of all temporal and spiritual blessings. If, therefore, thou hast any want, seek its supply from God.

LANGE: It is much more easy and pleasant for a true child of God to serve Him in the enjoyment of his favor and with inward peace, than it is for an untaught child of the world to cleave to it with its restless service of sin.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Crosses and obstacles in an even course are great blessings, and are so to be accounted; they are God's hedges to keep us from transgressing, to restrain us from wandering out of the green pastures, to "withdraw man from his purpose" (Job xxxiii. 17), to make the way of sin difficult that we may not go on in it, and to keep us from it whether we will or not. We have reason to bless God for restraining grace and for restraining judgment. God is a bountiful benefactor even to those whom He foresees will be ungrateful and unthankful to Him. — M.]

Ver. 10. God ever remains the Possessor of the gifts He bestows. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* It is a shameful and inexcusable sin to misuse the gifts of God, in order to serve our evil desires or to promote evil ends. It is a great sin to devote the riches, which God bestows, to the service of idolatry or superstition.

[PUSEY: Since "men have as many strange gods as they have sins," what do they who seek pleasure or gain greatness or praise in forbidden ways or from forbidden sources, than make their pleasure or gain or ambition their god, and offer their time and understanding and ingenuity and intellect, yea their whole lives and their whole selves, their souls and bodies, all the gifts of God, in sacrifice to the idols they have made? — M.]

Ver. 11. PFAFF. BIBELWERK: God takes his gifts from us when we misuse them. He demands a heavy reckoning.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Those that abuse the mercies God gives them to his dishonor cannot expect to enjoy them long. — M.]

Ver. 12. HENGSTENBERG: Him who forsakes God for the world, God puts to shame before the world, and that all the more, the nearer he formerly stood to Him.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Those who will not deliver themselves into the hand of God's mercy cannot be delivered out of the hand of his justice. — M.]

Ver. 14. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* Thus on account of false worship of God and impious doctrine, are whole countries destroyed by the Lord. O, that true zeal would animate the great ones of this world to destroy the kingdom of Satan everywhere powerfully, so that the hand of the Lord may not smite them.

[HENGSTENBERG: The sacred writers are not ashamed to use a base word for such base traffic. They speak throughout of common things in a common manner; for the vulgar word is the most suitable for a vulgar thing. The morality of a people or of an age may be measured by their speaking of a vulgar thing in a vulgar manner, or the reverse. — M.]

Ver. 15. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* This is the way of the gracious and merciful God: if He does first lead us into the desert and make us feel the rod of his wrath, He speaks kindly to us afterwards when we repent, and applies his mercy to our stricken hearts, which are thus made more capable of using it aright.

[MATTHEW HENRY: The best way of reducing wandering souls to God is by fair means. By the promise of rest in Christ we are invited to take his yoke upon us, and the work of conversion may be forwarded by comforts as well as by convictions.

PUSEY: God has mercy, not because we deserve it, but because we need it. He draws us because we are so deeply sunken. He prepares the soul by these harder means, and thus the depths of her misery cry to the depths of his compassion: and because chastisement alone would stupefy her, not melt her, He changes his wrath into mercy, and speaks to the heart which, for her salvation, He has broken. — M.]

Ver. 17. Strife and tribulation are to believers by God's grace a door of hope (Rom. v. 4). It is a peculiar and special work for God's children to praise Him with mouth, heart, and life, for so many blessings received.

PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* Behold, O soul, the consequence of thy true repentance. Thou hast new hope, new joy, new faith in Jesus the Bridegroom of our souls, the abandonment of all false and hypocritical worship, new blessings from God, security, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!

[PUSEY: To each returning soul, the *valley of trouble*, or the lowliness of repentance, becometh a *door of patient longing*, not in itself but because God *giveth* it so; a longing which reacheth on, awaiteth on, entering within the vail, and bound fast to the throne of God. — M.]

Ver. 19. KEIL: The abandonment of idolatry and mixed religion is a work of divine grace which renews the heart and fills it with abhorrence of idolatry in its gross or refined forms.

Ver. 20. Only then can men live with full enjoyment and security in the world, when they feel assured that they have a merciful God.

[MATTHEW HENRY: *Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia.* — M.]

Ver. 21. RIEGER: When the kind alluring of God finds entrance into us, when it educes an answer of humble penitence, how the faithful God becomes inclined to make all his covenant good to us, and to let no good thing fail of all that He has spoken.

PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* How highly are the souls of believers esteemed by God that He should betroth Himself to them, and that to eternity, and present Himself and his love to them literally as their own! For in this He presents to them his dear righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, which is of infinite worth; He acquits them in judgment; He displays toward them mercy and compassion by the forgiveness of sins. He even betroths Himself to them in faithfulness, and thus implants the true knowledge of Him in their souls. Prove, O soul, whether thou art as intimate with Him: Dost thou enjoy with Him a blessed and true communion of love? Why is it then that thou dost still love so much the world and sin, and that thy mind is ever occupied with other objects than Jesus?

[SAINT BERNARD: How can it be that so mighty a king should become a Bridegroom, that the Church should be exalted into a bride? That alone which is all-powerful hath power for this, Love that is strong as death. How should that not raise her up, which has already made Him to stoop? If He hath not acted as a spouse, if He hath not loved as a spouse, been jealous as a spouse, then hesitate thou to think thyself espoused. — M.]

Vers. 23, 24. If God be for us, who can be against us. Faith will assuredly gain a hearing. Behold, all creatures are ready to serve believers. Everything must drop blessings upon them.

Pfaff. *Bibelwerk:* God pours down upon believers from the lofty heaven of his mercy a shower of spiritual gifts, yes, even the oil of the Holy Spirit Himself. It is our part to open the mouths of our heart, and most eagerly receive those blessings which God's mercy vouchsafes to us.

[Matthew Henry: See what a peculiar delight those that are in covenant with God may take in their creature comforts, as seeing them all come to them from the hand of God; they can run up all the streams to the fountain, and taste covenant love in common mercies, which makes them doubly sweet. — M.]

Ver. 25. Pfaff. *Bibelwerk:* There is thus always time left for repentance, and the Lord still preserves a seed for Himself, which He makes fruitful and increases. If He then is so rich in mercy, O let us become ready to receive it by a true repentance and conversion, and not suppose that this great work can be accomplished in a lifeless spirit or with a hypocritical behavior.

Cramer: True faith knows God not only as God, but as its God.

Rieger: All in this life that is truly good is included in this: My God! if said not from habit, but with a full title to its use. This is a word of faith, by which we place our whole reliance upon the almighty, true, and compassionate God; it is a word of hope by which we provide ourselves with all good perpetually in God, who is a Rock of Eternity, a word of love and fellowship by which we delight ourselves in the goodness of God, and give ourselves wholly up to Him.

[Pusey: To say *my God*, is to own an exclusive relation to God alone. It is to say, my Beginning and my End, my Hope and my Salvation, in whom alone I will hope, whom alone I will fear, love, worship, trust in, and obey, and serve, with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind, my God and my All! — M.]

Chapter III.

The Love which Jehovah preserves towards the "Adulterous" People, and the Chastening in Love which He undertakes for their Conversion, again symbolically represented.

1 Then said the Lord [And Jehovah said] unto me, Go yet,[1] love a woman beloved
of *her* friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord [Jehovah] toward
the children of Israel, who look [and they turn] to other gods, and love flagons of
2 wine[2] [raisin-cakes]. So I bought her[3] to me for a homer of barley and a half-homer
3 of barley. And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide [remain quiet] for me many
days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for *another* man: so *will*
4 I also *be* for thee. For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king,
and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without
5 an ephod, and *without* teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return and
seek the Lord [Jehovah] their God, and David their king, and shall fear[4] the Lord
and his goodness in the latter days [shall tremble towards Jehovah and towards his goodness at the end of the days].

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1. — עוֹד might, especially to gain a relation to תְּחִלַּת (i. 2), be connected with וַיֹּאמֶר. But there is no sufficient ground for a change in the accentuation. The reference to chap. i. 2 is clear by the connection with לֵךְ.

[[2] Ver. 1. — The translation of the last two words of ver. 1, in E. V.: "flagons of wine," which is that of Junius, Tremellius, and others, and the various other renderings, have not been due to different readings, but to misconceptions of the meaning of אֲשִׁישֵׁי. The only variation of reading seems to have been that held by Aquila, who translates: παλαιά, having read יְשִׁישֵׁי. — M.]

[[3] Ver. 2. — וָאֶכְּרֶהָ has here daghesh-forte separative. See Green, *Gr.*, § 24 *b*; Ewald, § 90 *c* (*b*); Böttcher, § 229, 3; 399 *b* (1). Note the repetition of שְׂעֹרִים as characteristic of the Hebrew. It might be better to avoid the like construction in English, as many have done, by rendering: a homer-and-a-half of barley. See the exposition. — M.]

[4] Ver. 5. — פחדו אל is a pregnant construction: tremble (and come) toward Jehovah and toward his goodness.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Chapter iii. narrates a second symbolical action, in which the prophet has again to represent by his relations to a woman the relation of God to Israel. But as regards this relation, that which is to be presented to the senses is essentially different from that which the symbolical action of chap. i. was to present. There the sin of Israel was to be symbolized, with the judgment which Jehovah would inflict upon Israel for their idolatry. Here there is

no distinct reference to these. It might be assumed of itself that a simple repetition of the comparison would be inadmissible. We must rather expect an advance. This is found when we consider that we are no longer at the beginning as in chap. i., but that the whole exposition, from chap. ii. 1 onwards, lies between, and especially the section ii. 4 ff., where it is clearly stated that Israel will be deservedly punished, but only because of God's love in order that they may by chastisement be led to return and secure his favor. This announcement is presupposed in our chapter, which naturally stands in close relation to chap. i. But as the latter chapter forms a beginning, so also does it form a conclusion. For here we have not to do with the judgment, as such, which Israel has to suffer, the judgment of rejection, but with the symbolical declaration, that God loves Israel, must chasten them, but does so only out of love, only because He will not cast them off. The symbolizing of this love of God is shown expressly in ver. 1, to be the main object of this purely symbolical transaction, and the emphasis is therefore placed upon the command, to "love," laid upon the prophet, which is inserted designedly. The sequel shows of what kind this love is, and what is its aim. Vers. 1–3 describe the symbolical action. Vers. 4, 5 afford its explanation and inform us of its object.

Ver. 1. **And Jehovah said to me: go once more, etc.** The reference to chap. i. 2 is clear even by the collocation of עוֹד and לֵךְ. אֱהַב is essential, as already hinted, and therefore cannot be modified into a mere קח (i. 2) [= take], on account of the עֹד לֵךְ, which expresses the repetition of the former action. It is only the הֵלֵךְ that needs to be repeated, in relation to the woman. But what the prophet is to do this time in respect to the woman is אהב. This must express not merely a *disposition* to love (for a command, and especially the command לֵךְ, would not agree with this, expressing as it does an outward act), but an attestation or effectuation of love. Yet this presupposes an inclination to love; in so far it is demanded of the prophet. For he is to represent the conduct of God, and in that his displays of love spring from a loving mind. The prophet is to love a woman who is not in the least worthy of love — to love whom one feels and can feel no desire. אִשָּׁה אֲהֻבַת רֵעַ וּמְנָאָפֶת. Looking to the second epithet the sense is clear: committing adultery. Thus the prophet must marry an adulterous woman. This can scarcely be a woman who has been unfaithful to her marriage with another. It might be supposed, indeed, that she had been separated from her husband, and it would be difficult to love such a woman, as she gives no guarantee of her fidelity. But nothing is said of any such separation from another, and the *tertium comparationis* is just the fact that the prophet acts after the analogy of God, and therefore must love a woman who is unfaithful to her marriage with himself. But the difficulty lies in the indefiniteness of the time indicated by the part. מנאפת. Keil takes it to be future = who will become adulterous: naturally, if the woman is one who is first married to the prophet. But the difficulties which attend the explanation as future are less patent with Keil, for he regards אֱהַב = קַח, which, however, is arbitrary. If we take אֱהַב as אֱהַב, it is felt immediately that it cannot be simply a future adultery that is here meant. It is meant that love coexists with adultery at present existing, by which love is not destroyed, but rather is displayed to the adulteress as that which she had trifled with by her infidelity. Hence love is here rather something that is to follow. Only so is it the representative of the attitude of God which is here depicted. For God has indeed loved Israel, though He knew they would afterwards be unfaithful to Him. But it is not that which happened once that is to be exhibited by the prophet, but that which is now transpiring, the *present* conduct of God towards Israel (as in chap. i. the present conduct of Israel towards God, as Keil there correctly remarks; see above). It is this, that God does not withdraw his love from a spouse who has been and still is unfaithful. Besides, the supposition of a future adultery on the part of a wife whom the prophet is to take, is not admissible according to what follows. For the prophet in fulfilling the command makes this impossible for her (ver. 3). And to suppose that she commits adultery in spite of this prohibition in ver. 3 is against ver. 4; for there a condition of Israel is described in which there is no longer adultery (idolatry). Finally, we may ask more generally, how we can call a woman who is to commit adultery at some future time, אִשָּׁה מְנָאָפֶת? Therefore מנאפת is to be taken as a preterite or as a present = a woman who has been or is unfaithful to thee. And the conclusion is a necessary one, that a woman is supposed with whom the Prophet was already united. It would then be surprising, if it were quite forgotten in chap. iii. that a marriage of the prophet had already been described, and a new one were introduced. Such a broken, atomizing method of representation can hardly be imputed to a prophetic writer, especially as there is absolute necessity for understanding a reference to chap. i. in the very matter in question. No, as our chapter presupposes the preceding in a general way, it presupposes chap. i. specially; yet it naturally is not a repetition of the image, but an extension of it. There the prophet was commanded to marry a lewd woman (and to beget children by her). When such a woman is married she is no longer a whore, but an adulteress. For a woman, once characterized as אֵשֶׁת זְנוּנִים, naturally retains that character, and when married will be אִשָּׁה מְנָאָפֶת. It is thus that she appears in chap. iii. And as first the prophet was to marry a whorish woman, so now he is to love the whorish woman as married, *i. e.*, an adulterous wife. Compared with the other this is something higher, something new. The former was to exhibit a disturbed actual condition of things, — the existing inversion of the normal relations between God and Israel (and in the children the deserved punishment); the latter a comforting truth, the desired restitution of those relations. (We might add: As the unpropitious names of the children have been changed into their opposites, the same thing happens in a certain sense in the unpropitious marriage. There it was said: Thou must take a wife just because she is a whore, and so testify against Israel's sin and of their rejection, and now: Thou must love her although she is an adulteress, and so testify of Israel's hope). And as something essentially different is to be symbolized by this relation of the prophet to his wife, it is not to be wondered at — which cannot be denied, — that the form of

the discourse is such that something altogether new appears to begin, or that it appears as though the prophet were now for the first time being brought into relations with this woman. We have here again an indication that we have not to do with real, actual events. A narrative of an actual marriage of the prophet is not given; he is only conceived of as standing in that relation, and since it is only a feigned condition of things, it can very well be viewed first from one side, and then, without any preparation, from another. The woman is naturally called אִשָּׁה, not הָאִשָּׁה. For the emphasis lies upon the predicates; his wife appears here as an adulterous woman = love (in thy wife) an adulterous woman. The absence of the article can therefore not be urged against the identity of this woman with the former. This identity is, in fact, only presupposed in the command of our chapter. The main point is that the Prophet may be thought of (1) as being already married, (2) as experiencing his wife's adultery. No importance is attached to the person of the woman, for no actual event is described. If this were the case, a woman, living in wedlock with the Prophet, could not be spoken of as this one is here described. From this it is evident that we have here only the symbolizing of religious truth; as soon as this is accomplished the person of the woman possesses no further interest.

The suffix in אֶכְּרֶהָ (ver. 2), also appears to allude to a well known woman, and this cannot be disposed of by Keil's remark that the suffix refers simply to the woman mentioned in ver. 1. For according to Keil's view a woman is only *described* in ver. 1; it is only said what kind of woman she is. This mere predicate of a woman whose person is as yet undefined cannot afterwards be supplied by a personal pronoun but only by: such a woman, or, since that expression is unknown to the Hebrew, by repeating the whole predicate: a woman beloved, etc., if her name were not to be given. The pers. pron. would presuppose that the person named in ver. 1 was already well defined, and not simply a person of the kind described. But this woman is further described as אֲהֻבַת רֵעַ, and that before the other predicate. The sense has been taken differently: (1) = beloved by a paramour, and therefore parallel with מְנאָפֶת, or the latter would express its consequence: beloved by a paramour, and so committing adultery. (2) "Since רֵעַ in Jer. iii. 20 denotes a husband but never an adulterous paramour," the phrase is supposed = beloved by a husband and yet practicing adultery. But it is certainly incorrect to say that רֵעַ can be understood only of a husband and not of a paramour. It means paramour in Jer. iii. 1, at all events. It means simply: one with whom one has intercourse, a companion, and specially in the relations of love: one beloved (see the lexicons). The word does not determine whether the intercourse be lawful or not. Therefore the notion of the marriage relation must not be imported into the word, and we must remain by the sense: beloved one (friend, companion). If the marriage relation is indicated, רֵעַ is abstracted from this relation as such, and only its inner side, so to speak, the love that is felt in the married state, is brought into view. Now it is just this disposition of love that is to be emphasized in this connection, and therefore רֵעַ is chosen designedly. The word would thus be just as suitable used of illicit as of conjugal love. But it is especially in favor of the latter that, so far as the conduct of the woman is brought before us, she appears as the (guilty) subject of a love directed towards another, and is therefore to be represented actively, not passively, as the object of a love displayed by another; hence the passive expression: אֲהֻבַת רֵעַ, would give an unsuitable sense if it should mean: beloved by a paramour. Israel is essentially one who turns to paramours, runs after them unremittingly, while, on the other hand, Israel is the object of the Husband's love from the beginning, and is here represented as receiving it. Therefore in the figurative presentation also the love is regarded as coming from, and being bestowed by the husband upon the wife. (It would be otherwise if we had a different punctuation: אֹהֶבֶת). Hence the sense is: Love a woman, who, although beloved by her friend, has yet become an adulteress. Her sin is thus sharply stigmatized, that the love enjoined may appear in greater contrast to it and as something unmerited. This view of אֲהֻבַת רֵעַ shows all the more the untenableness of any reference to a woman whom the Prophet must now marry. For that phrase would then allude to some person who now appears for the first time. But what meaning would there be in the command: love a woman who will or is to be beloved by her husband, *i. e.*, by thee? The notion would be more tolerable only if אהב be (with Keil) modified into קַח which is, however, certainly inadmissible. The words: **as Jehovah loves the children of Israel,** etc., indicate expressly that what the prophet is to do has a symbolical meaning, and declares also what that meaning is. For they are plainly not merely to be connected (Keil) with אהבת רע ומנאפת = (love) a woman who, although beloved by her husband, commits adultery, and who acts as does Israel, who was loved by God and yet, etc. It is more natural to refer them to the command which the prophet received. This command of God, in itself so surprising and exacting, receives by them its symbolical explanation. It is laid upon him only that he may thus exhibit the love of God, who loves his people and manifests that love, in spite of their unfaithfulness, and by the love enjoined upon him he is to represent and assure to the people this love of God.

כְּאַהֲבַת does not merely indicate the reason why the prophet is to love this woman, but it declares also how he is to do so: he must not merely "love" in the general, but must love after that definite manner in which Jehovah loves the children of Israel (which is shown immediately thereafter). **And love raisin-cakes.** These must have been connected in some way with idolatrous worship: they probably belonged to the offerings presented to the idols, and eaten at the idol-festivals. Hence we are to understand first an image of idol-worship, whose enticing dainties are contrasted with the hard and healthy fare of the serious religion of Jehovah. But this special feature of the worship is chosen in order to show the service to be something agreeing with the flesh, satisfying the sensual nature; which explains the more easily Israel's apostasy, and at the same time includes a bitter reproach: "They forget their God for the sake of dainties."

Vers. 2, 3. **Then I purchased her for myself for fifteen silverlings,** etc. In ver. 2 we neces-

sarily find the fulfillment of the command of ver. 1, the אֱהַב there enjoined. This is a guide to the exposition. With כֶּסֶף we must supply שֶׁקֶל: fifteen shekels of silver. *Homer* is the name of a dry measure = a cor, or ten baths or ten ephahs (see Ezek. xlv. 11), לֶתֶךְ = a half homer. Together = a homer and a half or fifteen ephahs. The money value of this quantity of barley cannot be determined; for it is arbitrary to suppose, because fifteen ephahs are mentioned along with fifteen shekels of silver, that therefore they are of equal value, and that an ephah of barley was worth an ephah of silver. An agreement of the numbers would then have been avoided; nothing would have been said of the fifteen ephahs, and an altogether different measure would have been given. Nothing is to be concluded from 2 Kings vii. 1-18, nor from Ex. xxi. 32, if, indeed, the latter can be at all connected with this verse. It is supposed that the passage in Exodus affords the key to the understanding of our passage, and the thirty pieces of silver are sought here the more earnestly. Thirty pieces of silver are there stated to be the price of a slave, and it is supposed that the Prophet paid the same sum for the woman in order to symbolize the state of bondage from which God redeemed Israel. But Kurtz rightly rejects this explanation of the passage and its application to our verse, on the ground that there it is not the price of a slave that is alluded to, but the compensation allowed for a slave killed on account of the carelessness of another. In the latter case it was just as allowable and fitting to fix one and the same price without respect to age, sex, and constitution, as it would have been wrong and foolish to fix the market price under the same conditions. For in the former case (of killing) the responsibility was just the same no matter who the slave might be, a strong man, or a woman, or a decrepit or aged person. Zech. xi. 12 might better be compared. But this passage does not speak of the price of a slave, and besides, it is an arbitrary assumption that our passage speaks of thirty shekels' worth. So we are shut up to an explanation of our passage from itself alone, and we have no sure ground for believing that a redemption from bondage is alluded to. On the other hand, we are not justified in assuming a purchase of the woman from her parents with the pieces of silver, etc., for "it cannot be shown that it was a custom with the Israelites to purchase the bride from her parents" (Keil). Keil therefore holds that the fifteen silverlings, etc., are something given to the woman. Of course it cannot be meant that the pieces of silver, etc., were given to the present paramour of the woman. Such an offering would be itself surprising: but we must also remember that the woman is not conceived of as being adulterously connected with a paramour. What now does וָאֶכְּרֶהָ mean? It is clear that the meaning "dig" is unsuitable here, for the explanation of Hengstenberg, from Ex. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17, is strange and awkward. In Gen. l. 5; Deut. ii. 6; Job vi. 27; xl. 30, it has the meaning: purchase, make a bargain; in the last two passages with עַל of the person or thing for or about which the bargain was made: in the first two with an accusative = to purchase, buy; in the first with לְ, of the person who is bought: in the second with בְּ, of the price paid. So also here: I purchased her to me for, etc. This certainly appears not to agree with our explanation of chap. iii., which we hold is concerned with a woman with whom the prophet is already married; but this contradiction is only apparent. For, though the woman is married to the prophet, she is yet an adulterous wife, and has therefore renounced her husband (compare Israel's attitude towards God). If he "loves" her still, and would prove to her his enduring love, he must act towards her as one who weds a wife, he must purchase her, like a stranger, with a bridal gift. If this points to the guilt, the extreme estrangement of the woman, it shows also directly the endurance of the husband's love that he should act thus, that he should treat as a bride a degraded, adulterous wife, from whom it would be most natural to cut himself entirely loose, that he should even give her a bridal present in opposition to all natural inclinations! Yet this is not a blind love, but it corresponds to the circumstances of the case (compare God's attitude towards Israel), a love which involves a beneficial chastening. This is indicated in our verse. It is assuredly not without design that a production of nature forms part of the gift. It shows that it was intended for the support of life. It is probably indicated that the woman is not yet taken into the husband's house; for such a gift would then have no meaning. Further, the bridal gift is such a one as the wife had the least right to claim or expect: a token that her husband loves her still and will not cut himself off wholly from her. And if this cannot be maintained with certainty, it is still probable (barley was among the ancients a food but little esteemed) that this whole present was not at all a rich one, but only barely sufficient, especially if we can assume that it was to last "many days." Ver. 3 gives additional information as to the action of the prophet described in ver. 2, יָמִים רַבִּים, an indefinite period of long duration: the end will depend upon the conduct of the wife. תֵּשְׁבִי לִי. יָשַׁב = to sit, *i. e.*, "to keep quiet. The לִי shows that such conduct was to be observed with reference to the husband, that he so disposes of her from love to her, in order to improve her and educate her to become his faithful wife." יָשַׁב לִי therefore does not mean: dwell with me. What was remarked in ver. 2 proves this already, and the meaning of ver 4, especially, would not suit such a sense, for a relation of communion with God is here denied. The difficult words וְגַם אֲנִי אֵלַיִךְ, are probably to be explained in a corresponding manner with the recent expositors: and I will be so towards thee, namely, observe the same conduct towards thee, *i. e.*, have no conjugal intercourse with thee. Another explanation is: and I also will hold myself ready for thee, wait for thee, *i. e.*, not take any other wife. This is possible in itself, but not suitable to ver. 4, which contains the explanation of ver. 3. For this verse contains only a negative thought (see on ver. 4). Therefore the sense of the whole is: The Prophet displays unmerited love towards his adulterous wife, according to the command אֱהַב for, like a bridegroom he again acquires her with a bridal gift. But this love has also for its object the improvement of the wife, and he therefore manifests his love in such a manner as to secure that end. He cares for her support, but limits her allowance that she may learn salutary humility. He naturally interdicts her adul-

terous habits, but does not at once resume his conjugal intercourse with her. This is therefore a manifestation of love of a disciplinary character, but still essentially of love,—just as is that of God toward Israel.

Ver. 4. **For many days will the children of Israel sit,** etc. Ver. 4 is the explanation (כִּי = for) of ver. 3. Three pairs of objects are named of which the children of Israel shall be deprived. King and prince—holders of the civil government, which will therefore cease in Israel. Also the worship will cease with it. This is represented by the two following, זֶבַח, sacrifice, and מַצֵּבָה, statues, defining the sense more closely. Besides these, two objects used as oracles are mentioned: the ephod, which was strictly the High-priest's shoulder-garment, with the Urim and Thummim, which was put on or brought out when oracles were given. It is brought into view here evidently not in relation to the High-priest, but on account of its connection with oracles in general, as its use was imitated even by idolaters in worship (Judges xvii. 5; xviii. 14, 17, 18, 20). The תְּרָפִים were also used for the same purpose. They are equivalent to *Penates* (comp. Zech. xix. 2; Ezek. xxi. 26), and in the passage cited from Judges are mentioned along with the ephod. Whether the sense is that Israel will have neither the worship of Jehovah nor idolatry, remains doubtful. For, according to what has been said, the ephod does not directly imply the worship of Jehovah; still less does זֶבַח. Probably the distinction between the two is not implied, but worship simply indicated. The condition of things is described as one of the deprivation of that which had been Israel's support (king and prince) and joy and consolation (sacrifice, etc.); and the important fact is that idolatry should cease. This should be effected against Israel's desire, would be a punishment like the cessation of their own government, civil independence; but the punishment is a chastening in love, a token that God had not forgotten Israel. It is true that this positive truth, of a manifestation of love, lies in the background in our verse, which wears a negative aspect. But this love was declared in ver. 1 to be the main thought, and in ver. 5 (whose purport, moreover, transcends the symbol) it appears quite clearly by the issue to be the object in view.

Ver. 5. **Afterwards will the children of Israel return:** a *post hoc* which includes, however, clearly a *propter hoc*, *i. e.*, the situation described in ver. 4 is an essential coöperating factor. **Will seek Jehovah their God and David their king.** "Seeking Jehovah their God is connected with seeking David their king. For as the apostasy of the ten tribes from the kingdom of David was only the consequence and result of its inner apostasy from Jehovah, so the true return to God could not take place without a return to their king David, since God had promised the kingdom to David forever in his seed (2 Sam. vii. 13, 16); thus David is the only true king of Israel—*their* king" (Keil). The family of David is probably primarily meant, and more strictly, a king of that family. The conclusion, "at the end of the days," alludes to the Messianic period, according to prophetic usage elsewhere; hence we are justified in assuming the Messiah to be also meant here. **Will tremble towards Jehovah.** פָּחַד, to tremble; with אֶל it forms a pregnant expression: tremble hastening towards. It is a stronger expression for the preceding בִּקֵּשׁ = seek with anxiety, since the needed help is found in the One sought; therefore sought with solicitude, although He assuredly will be found, because He is the seeker's only dependence. This is thus the direct contrast to the former abandonment of Jehovah and seeking help in idols. What is sought in God is *his goodness*, especially in his gifts, of which they had been deprived (comp. Jer. xxxi. 12; Zech. ix. 17). On **the end of the days** see the preceding remarks. This is therefore the end of the "many days," or the fuller explanation of אַחַר.

[The discussion given above of this chapter is so full and able, both as to its general purport and as to its special features, that no additions are necessary from any writer holding the identity of the woman here described with that of chap. i. The force of some of the arguments employed is overestimated, and others, as is readily perceived, are too largely based on mere speculation, yet the general results go to show the strong probability of the correctness of this hypothesis and of its consequences, where they affect the interpretation of individual passages. The recent English commentators agree with the majority of the moderns in holding this view. Newcome adopts the old opinion that the Prophet's former wife (Gomer) had died in the interval. Noyes thinks that it is immaterial whether the women are identical or not. The fullness of the discussion of the several minor features of this short chapter precludes the necessity of additions from the remarks of Anglo-American expositors, which are, moreover, usually of a comparatively general nature. On some points, as, for example, the object of the "purchase" of the woman, and its symbolical meaning, the difficulties cannot be said to be yet satisfactorily solved.—M.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. On the love of Jehovah to Israel, which endures in spite of all unfaithfulness, but does not forget to chasten, see the Introduction, and especially No. 1 in the Doctrinal and Ethical section attached to chap. ii.

2. A condition of things, such as that threatened in ver. 4, characterized the kingdom of the ten tribes when they were led away into exile by Assyria; and in this we can see a fulfillment, although nothing is said of any captivity, and in fact nothing of the manner in which the kingdom and worship should cease. It is very doubtful, to say the least, whether we can claim for the threatening a wider range, and make it apply also to the kingdom of Judah. Nothing can be adduced from the resemblance to the threatening which the Prophet Azariah uttered against Judah in the days of Asa (2 Chron. xv. 2, 4). For ver. 5 of our chapter points too clearly to the kingdom of the ten tribes, and no judgments are pronounced against Judah until the later chapters, which belong to a later period. The threatening goes hand in hand with the promise. The latter holds out, first of all, a return, which, according to the words: shall seek Jehovah their God, is to be taken as a contrast to the resort made to other gods (ver. 1). According to the promise they will also seek David their king. [See the passage quoted from Keil in the exegetical section.] The house of David is naturally the primary object of the reference. For in returning thither they acknowledge the divine

right of David to the kingdom. This promise is shown here indubitably to be Messianic by the expression: "at the end of the days," which "does not denote the future in general, but always the coming consummation of the kingdom of God, which begins with the advent of the Messiah." (Keil.) We cannot, therefore, find the fulfillment in that which happened in the return from the Babylonian exile, apart from the consideration that that event affected mainly the kingdom of Judah, while here the kingdom of Israel is the subject of discourse; thus the promise was not then fulfilled. Hence the question is suggested here also: Since this promise was not fulfilled to Israel even with the coming of the Messiah, has it fallen to the ground, or is the fulfillment yet to be expected? According to what has been remarked under chap. i., both questions are to be answered in the negative, and the answer rather is: The fulfillment has already begun in Him, in whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen, but in another and far higher sense than the Prophet imagined, who saw the people of God in Israel alone. Separating the kernel from the husk, we must, upon the ground of the New Covenant, see the fulfillment in the gathering of a people of God around a descendant of David who was greater than David's son, — around Christ. And so, though this is not the literal meaning of the promise, "King David" that one of David's family who was to be sought after, is the Messiah. In this Son of David it is fulfilled, though not yet completely. The promise is still in course of fulfillment, and to its perfect fulfillment is specially necessary the universal conversion of Israel to Christ, but, as is natural, not merely the people of the ten tribes, here literally indicated.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. LUTHER: Let us cease to fear the wrath and judgment of God on account of our sins, and believe what the Prophet says, that God is like a husband who, although he has been deserted by an adulterous wife and is angry thereat, is yet more impelled by mercy, than urged by the sin of the adulteress, and wins her back to his love. And truly has the Prophet in two respects set forth great things. For, in the first place, he could not describe sin as being more dreadful than he here pictures it in the sin of the adulteress. And, again, he extols highly the love of God by this image, when he says that He is animated by love towards the adulteress.

[PUSEY: His love was to outlive hers, that He might win her at last to Himself. Such, God says, is the love of the Lord for Israel. — M.]

[Ver. 2. MATTHEW HENRY: Those whom God designs honor and comfort for He first makes sensible of their own worthlessness, and brings them to acknowledge with the prodigal: "I am no more worthy to be called thy son." Poverty and disgrace sometimes prove a happy means of making great sinners penitent. Comp. the Exegetical remarks. — M.]

Ver. 4. Although it is a great punishment of God, that a government should be cast down, it is yet a much greater punishment that liberty should be taken away to serve God and teach his Word.

LUTHER: Ver. 5. These are glorious words of the Prophet who thus combines God and Christ in worship, so that, when we call upon God, we should do so through Christ; when we hope in the mercy of God we hope through Christ that God would have mercy on us.

[PUSEY: So God's goodness overflows with beneficence and condescension, and graciousness and mercy and forgiving love, and joy in imparting Himself, and complacence in the creatures which He has reformed, and refound, redeemed, and sanctified for his glory. Well may his creatures *tremble towards* it with admiring wonder that all this can be made theirs! — M.]

PART SECOND.

JEHOVAH PLEADS WITH ISRAEL HIS BELOVED BUT UNFAITHFUL SPOUSE.

CHAPTERS IV.-XIV.

FIRST DISCOURSE.

CHAPTERS IV.-XI.

I. THE ACCUSATION.

CHAPTERS IV.-VII.

A. *Against the People as a Whole on Account of their Idolatry and the Corruption of their Morals (promoted by the Priests).*

CHAPTER IV. 1-19.

1 Hear the word of Jehovah, ye children of Israel!
For Jehovah has a difference with the inhabitants of the land,
Because there is no fidelity and no goodness
And no knowledge of God in the land;
2 (Only) cursing and lying,
And murdering and stealing and adultery;
They break in, and murder follows upon murder.
3 Therefore will the land mourn,
And all who dwell therein shall languish,
With the beast[1] of the field and the bird of heaven;
And the fish of the sea also shall be swept away.

4 Only let none contend,
And let none reprove (another);
And thy people[2] is like those that strive with the priest.
5 And thou shalt fall in the day-time.
And the Prophet also shall fall with thee in the night,
And I will destroy thy mother.

6 My people are destroyed for want of knowledge![3]
Because thou despisest knowledge,
So do I despise thee[3] to be my Priest;
Because thou dost forget the law of thy God,
I also will forget thy children.
7 The more they increased the more they sinned against me;
Their glory will I turn into shame.
8 They eat [make profit of] the sin of my people,
And direct their desires after their transgressions.
9 And so it is: as the people, so the priest,
And I will visit their ways upon them,
And reward to them their deeds.
10 Then they shall eat and not be satisfied,
Will practice whoredom and not spread abroad,
Because they forgot[4] Jehovah, to regard Him.

11 Whoredom and wine and new wine
Will take (possession of) a heart.
12 My people[5] inquires of its wood [idols],
And their staff shall declare to it;
For the spirit of whoredom has deceived them,
And they commit whoredom (departing) from under their God.
13 They sacrifice on the summits of the mountains,
And burn incense on the hills;
Under the oak and poplar and terebinth,
Because their shadow is pleasant.
Therefore your daughters commit whoredom
And your daughters-in-law commit adultery.
14 Yet I will not visit upon [punish] your daughters because they commit whoredom,
Nor your daughters-in-law because they commit adultery;
For they [you] themselves go aside with prostitutes,
And sacrifice with temple-girls,
And the people without understanding shall be cast down.

15 If thou commit whoredom, O Israel!
Let not Judah become guilty,
Go not to Gilgal,
And ascend not to Beth-aven,
And swear not: by the life of Jehovah.
16 For Israel is as intractable as an unbroken heifer;
Now Jehovah will pasture them
Like a lamb in a wide field.
17 Ephraim is joined to idols — let him be.
18 Their drinking-feast is spoiled;
They keep on whoring.
Their shields [rulers] keep on loving shame.[6]
19 The tempest seizes them with its wings:
And they shall be ashamed of their sacrifices.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 3. — בְּחַיַּת וגו׳. בְּ is used here as in Gen. vii. 21; ix. 10, to specify or enumerate objects indicated before in the general. In usage, though not in grammatical function, it is equivalent to our *namely*. — M.]

[2 Ver. 4. — וְעַמְּךָ. Newcome gives a variety of emendations and transpositions, partly from other sources, in order to obtain a more natural sense than the one he draws from the text. He seems to have been misled by the difficulty suggested by Houbigant, who remarks that it could not be a crime to contend with idolatrous priests. These of course, are not meant. See the exposition. Among the ancient translators, the LXX., Aquila, and Arab. read עַמִּי: my people, which seems more natural but is not necessary. — M.] Meier would point differently, and reads וְעִמְּךָ: with thee, against thee, namely, God, and makes the negation continue: (let no one be) against thee. This is forced. The יְהִי would be necessary, and עִם would not be the proper preposition.

[3 Ver. 6. — We must not read מִבְּלִי דַעַת unexpectedly (Meier). The article is essential — וְאֶמְאָסְאךָ. According to the Masora the third א is superfluous, and therefore probably a chirographical error. According to Ewald it is an Aramaic pausal form. [Henderson: The third א is not found in a great number of Kennicott's and De Rossi's manuscripts, nor in some of the earlier printed editions; in others it is marked as redundant, and a few have אמאסך קְרִי. — M.]

4 Ver. 10. — לִשְׁמֹר. Meier attaches this word to the following verse: to practice lewdness, etc. But this is forced. [Henderson cites the similar view of Saadias, Arnold, and Horsley, but thinks "there is something so repugnant to Hebrew usage in the combination: to observe fornication, wine and new wine, that it is altogether inadmissible." But his choice of the term "observe" is arbitrary. In thus opposing Horsley, he overlooks the fact that the latter renders: to give attention to, a sense of the word which is not at all repugnant to Hebrew usage. It must be remembered that they "neglected" Jehovah or dropped Him from their thoughts; the antithesis would naturally be: to keep in mind lewdness, etc. This is the exact usage of the word in Gen. xxxvii. 11; Ps. cxxx. 3. Horsley's arguments are mainly based upon the double anomaly of the construction as formerly assumed, in which עזב was supposed to govern its object indirectly (and irregularly) by means of לְ with the infinitive, and שׁמר was regarded as governing (against usage) יהוה as its direct object: they forsook to regard Jehovah. עזב is now admitted by some to govern יהוה directly, and the pers. pron.: *him*, is supplied after *regard*, as is done by Schmoller. But, even with this construction, the omission of the object in the original after לִשְׁמֹר would be unaccountable and very abrupt. To these consider-

ations this other may be added, that under the present division of the verses, ver. 11 is made unusually brief. These difficulties in the way of the ordinary constructions should lead us to regard the subversion of the mark of division between the verses with more favor than should ordinarily be shown to attempts at amending the text. The proposed change would give the translation: because they have neglected Jehovah to set their minds on whoredom and wine and new wine, (which) will take possession of the heart. — M.]

[5 Ver. 12. — Henderson: "The LXX. and most versions which follow them connect עַמִּי with לֵב at the end of the preceding verse; a mode of construction adopted by Michaelis and Dathe, but otherwise disapproved by modern translators. — M.]

6 Ver. 18. — אָהֲבוּ הֵבוּ perhaps belong together, a *pialal* form from אהב, except that the doubling has been separated in an extraordinary manner. It is therefore really instead of אֲהַבְהָבוּ. Wünsche would read אָהֲבוּ אָהֹב resembling the preceding הַזְנֵה הִזְנוּ. [On this combination see Green, *Gr.*, §§ 92 *a*, 122, 1; Ewald, § 120 *a*; Böttcher, § 1065 *b*. These grammarians, as well as the best critics generally, regard it as one word. The form with which it is usually compared is צְמַתֻתוּנִי, Ps. lxxxviii. 17. The last named author calls our form a *Qetaltal*, corresponding to the form adopted by Schmoller. The notion conveyed by such forms is that of intensity, or repetition. So Ewald: *es lieben lieben Schmach seine Schilde*. Comp the rendering of Delitzsch in the passage just cited: *vernicht-nichtigt*. If the alternative of separate words be adopted, it would be almost necessary to adopt some such expedient as that of Wünsche given above; for the rendering of E. V.: her rulers with shame do love; give ye, is almost unintelligible. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Four strophes may be supposed with Keil (vers. 1–5; 6–10; 11–14; 16–19), although it can hardly be maintained in general, that our Prophet observes a strict strophical division.

Ver. 1. **Hear the word of Jehovah,** etc. Jehovah appears against Israel as a Judge (that is, Israel of the Ten Tribes, comp. ver. 15), who raises the accusation, and pronounces the sentence and punishment. In a certain sense this first strophe contains the sense of the whole. **Jehovah has a contest** = legal action, comp. Micah vi. 2, and with relation to the heathen, Joel iii. 2. — אֱמֶת is faithfulness, trueness to one's word. חֶסֶד is affection, kindness, love. These qualities are frequently mentioned together; usually as divine attributes, but sometimes also as human virtues. חסד is here probably special kindness towards the feeble and distressed (Keil). The opposites are primarily moral defects. But they have their root in that which is Israel's grand defect, in the want of the knowledge of God, *i. e.*, they do not know the living God or know Him any longer — naturally through their own fault — since they do not care to serve Him.

Ver. 2. Along with the negative description of the corruption we have the positive. The sins are not described by substantives, but are expressed in a lively manner as actions by verbs, and that with special emphasis by the inf. absol. Five sins are thus mentioned, corresponding to five of the Ten Commandments, and at the same time these sins form a definite contrast to fidelity and goodness. Swearing along with lying naturally = false swearing, or, at all events, wanton swearing. פָּרָצוּ forms the transition to the finite verb; the last three sins, especially murder, are represented in the concrete, and at the same time as something fearfully prevalent. [The literal translation of the the last three words is: and bloody deed touches bloody deed. דָּמִים meant originally: drops of blood, then transferred to deeds of blood in general, and it is altogether probable that this word was chosen here to present to the imagination the picture of a swift succession of murderous assaults, following so closely that drops of the blood of one victim might be conceived as meeting and mingling with those of another. If so, this is a striking illustration of Hosea's wonderful power of graphic poetical delineation. Henderson: "What the Prophet means is that murder was so common that no space was left between its acts. LXX.: αἵματα ἐφ᾽ αἵματι μίσγουσι. Coverdale: one bloudgiltyness foloweth another. And Ritterhusius powerfully in his poetical metaphrase: —

—— '*Sic sanguini sanguis*
Traditur, et scelerum nullus finisve modusve est.' "

See 2 Kings xv.; Micah vii. 2. — M.]

Ver. 3. **Therefore will the land mourn,** etc. The punishment of that moral deprivation; a great and universal drought, such, *e. g.*, as prevailed under Ahab, was a judgment of God. This is described in its effects: The mourning of the land is a lively figurative expression for the scorching away of all vegetable productions, and the languishing of animal life, and the beasts are named, because the drought was, so to speak, to be described from its natural side (comp. Joel i. 10 ff.). It is just in this condition of nature generally that God executes judgment upon man. The drought is not to be conceived of as existing at present, but is threatened, as the whole chapter generally is occupied with threatening. כָּל־יוֹשֵׁב בָּהּ probably does not refer to the men themselves but is specified by the following בְּ, and therefore refers to the beasts, etc. [Keil: בְּ is used in the enumeration of the individuals as in Gen. vii. 21; ix. 10. The fishes are mentioned last, and introduced by the emphatic וְגַם to show that the drought would prevail to such an extent that even lakes and other bodies of waters would be dried up. הֵאָסֵף: to be collected, to be taken away, to disappear or perish." — M.]

Ver. 4. **Only let none contend, and let none reprove,** etc. These words appear quite unexpectedly and are not quite clear. There seems to be a verbal reference to ver. 1; and it may be that there is a contrast to that contending there announced on the part of God. The sense would then be: The Lord will contend, but it is presumptuous for men to strive against Him; none are to contend or reprove. Or we might forego the reference to ver. 1, and explain generally: let none contend or reprove! The hardened hearts of the people would then be referred to, who would listen to no rebuke. So Luther after the Vulgate:

yet let none rebuke, etc. But אַךְ is thus falsely rendered. It is not = yet. Therefore others hold that there is a demand "only" to neglect pleading with and rebuking the corrupt people. There would indeed be much to rebuke, but it would be to no purpose (Keil). But this thought is not suitable to the context. It is just on the part of God that the רִיב does take place, and is not the whole prophetic discourse a rebuke? Others suppose a demand to the people not to resist God and his judgment. But הוֹכִיחַ will not suit here; it must be taken in the sense of censuring: let none censure God and his deeds. The explanation of Wünsche is therefore better: let none quarrel with another and attribute to him the blame of the calamity. **And thy people as those who contend with the priest,** that is, are like those, etc. With the first explanation of the preceding words, the ones now considered would surround them with still greater difficulties: let none contend — uttered with respect to the spirit of contradiction among the people — and they act as, etc. With the second explanation the words serve to support the preceding, to show the uselessness of contending and rebuking: yet thy people are like, etc. The explanation of Wünsche shows the best connection: the reason is given why none should reproach the others: the whole people are alike. In form however the sentence is not a confirmatory one, being simply coördinated by וְ [This objection is not conclusive. וְ very often introduces a reason. See Green, *Gr.*, § 287, 1. The opinion assigned to Wünsche is that not only adopted in E. V. but approved by most of the recent English commentators. Noyes prefers the view assigned above to Keil. On attempts to amend the text for other renderings, see the Textual note. — M.] **Contend with the priest** — an unexpected expression, perhaps to be explained by Deut. xvii. 12 f. The people are like those who in the Law are described as rebels against the authority of the priest. They are therefore those who would not allow themselves to be directed aright by those whose prerogative it was to direct them (Hengstenberg, Keil).

Ver. 5. כָּשַׁל naturally refers to the punishment [as the cause of the fall (destruction) of the people, whom the Prophet now directly addresses. — M.] **Prophet,** naturally = false prophets (comp. 1 Kings xxii. 6 ff.), "who followed prophesying as a source of gain." **In the day, — by night**: a figurative representation distributed according to the members of the sentence. The meaning is: the people and prophets shall fall all the time. **And I will destroy thy mother** = the whole nation conceived of as the mother of the children of Israel.

Ver. 6. **My people is destroyed.** מִבְּלִי הַדָּעַת, not: unawares (Meier), but: from want of knowledge [see Gram. note], *i. e.*, chiefly, knowledge of God. Yet the expression is to be taken primarily in its general reference; compare the beginning and end of the next strophe [vers. 11–14]. This want of knowledge is blameworthy, a despising of knowledge. This shows the nearer reference to be to the knowledge of God. Israel could have gained this from the law, but had forgotten that law. **And I will despise thee from being a priest to me.** This does not refer to the priest simply. All Israel, according to Ex. xix. 6, was to be a priestly people, and to be thus distinguished from the heathen, the profane. But they were to forfeit this high prerogative. The notion therefore = "shall be not-my-people," chaps. i.–ii.

Ver. 7. **The more they increased,** not merely in numbers, but in prosperity, power, etc., — **the more they sinned**; comp. ii. 7. They ascribed this prosperity to their idols, and were thus confirmed in idolatry. Accordingly Israel's glory, consisting in their richness and greatness, shall be turned into shame, *i. e.*, they shall lose their glory and stand dishonored.

Ver. 8. A transition to the Priests, according to the purport of the words, and the beginning of ver. 9. **They eat the sin of my people.** They live upon, derive their support from, the sin of the people. That is their right to do so, the more the people sin, *i. e.*, serve idols. For the very existence of the idol priesthood depended upon the idolatry of the people. Keil, still more specially, makes חַטַּאת עַמִּי = sin-offering of the people (so also Luther). In the Law the priest was enjoined to eat the flesh of the sin-offering to blot out the sin of the people (Lev. vi. 19). But that became sin to the priests, because (second member of the verse) they directed their desires towards the transgression of the people, that is, wished their transgressions to multiply, so as to acquire a large supply of food from their offerings. The peculiar expression: eat the sin, may still bear allusion to the sacrificial ritual. But the notion is probably more general: they live upon the sin = the idolatry of the people, as they eat the flesh of the sacrifice offered to idols. **He lifts up his soul towards** = directs his desires towards. The singular suffix is anomalous; it is perhaps distributive: each one lifts up his soul. The meaning of the whole would be: Since they live upon the sin of my people, they wish for nothing more earnestly than that the people should keep on sinning more and more, namely, in idolatry. [So the expositors generally. — M.]

Ver. 9. Since the priests go hand in hand with the people, the people serving idols and the priests desiring their idolatry, a like punishment will overtake them all. [Henderson: "The rank and wealth of the priests will not exempt them from sharing the same fate with the rest of the nation." — M.]

Ver. 10. **They will eat,** etc. "Eat" refers back to ver. 8, and therefore the primary reference is to the priests — הִזְנוּ. The usual force of the hiphil = entice to whoredom, would hardly suit here, although it is the priests who are spoken of. The addition וְלֹא יִפְרֹצוּ, is unsuitable to this sense, for an extension by the procreation of children, which is here denied of them, could be predicated of those who commit whoredom, but not of those who only seduce others into that sin. Therefore it probably = a strengthened kal, as in ver. 18; 2 Chron. xxi. 13. The literal signification cannot here be excluded, if we take into account the conclusion of the verse, and especially the parallelism with "eat." Ver. 11, also, necessitates the conjunction of whoredom with "wine and must" = debauchery, and thus supports the literal interpretation, as also in vers. 13, 14, the daughters are said to be actual whores. But yet all this is only the consequence of spiritual whoredom = idolatry, and in closest connection with it. It is that which is to be rebuked, and the figurative sense therefore predominates in ver. 12, where idolatrous practices are specially

denounced, in the expression: spirit of whoredom. Whoredom as a consequence of idolatry, and as connected with it, and idolatry itself, are to the prophet perfectly identical, because inseparably united. The reason why they will not be satisfied or be extended, which are negative expressions affirming strongly their opposite, is that **they forsook to regard.** The expression refers to Jehovah: they forsook Jehovah, to keep Him, to regard, to honor Him (comp. Ps. xxxi. 7; Prov. xxvii. 18) = they forsook Him and ceased to regard, honor Him. [See Gram. note. — M.]

Ver. 11. Whoredom and wine and new wine takes possession of the heart, לֵב, "the centre of the whole spiritual and moral life, the understanding, the will, and the sensibilities" (Wünsche). Hence the capture of the heart = the obscuring and perversion of the understanding and the will, expressing generally the intellectually and morally polluting influence of a life given up to sensual enjoyment. Then in the first member of ver. 12 a proof of this is adduced, — a special instance of apostasy from the living God.

Ver. 12. שָׁאַל בְּעֵצוֹ, inquire of idols framed of wood, especially teraphim, in order to gain a divine revelation; in direct contrast to שָׁאַל יְהוָה. The reproach is made keener by the contrasted words: *my* people, *their* wood: the people who are Jehovah's seek to wood, which is made their god instead of Jehovah. **Their staff shall instruct them.** This was the so-called rhabdomancy: two staves placed upright were allowed to fall while incantations were being repeated, and an oracular response was supposed to be given by the direction of its fall, backwards or forwards, to the right or to the left. [So described by Cyril of Alexandria. Compare the use of divining-rods or wishing-rods. — M.] This course of action is expressly attributed to the influence of a *spirit of whoredom:* idolatry (in connection with its consequences, whoredom and debauchery) is a seductive, demoniacal power, which they could no longer resist. מִתַּחַת אֱלֹ׳, literally, from under their God, like מֵאַחֲרֵי (i. 2), the normal relation to God is here regarded as one of subjection. It is from this that they withdraw themselves.

Ver. 13. **Upon the summits of the mountains,** etc. (comp. Deut. xii. 2; Jer. ii. 20; iii. 6; Ezek. vi. 13). Mountains and hills, as is well known, were favorite places for idolatrous worship. So also were green and shady trees in pleasant places (here specified instead of the usual general expression, "under every green tree"). "Therefore" = because the places of idol-worship everywhere arranged gave abundant opportunity, therefore your daughters commit lewdness (Keil). "Lewdness" is here, at all events, used in its literal sense, see especially ver. 14, second part. The prostitution of young maidens and of wives formed an essential portion of the nature-worship of Babylon and Canaan. It would seem from the mention of temple-girls in ver. 14 that the worship of Astarte, or something similar, is implied. But, even apart from this, the sensuous character of idolatry commonly induced unchaste practices.

Ver. 14. **Those who are young cannot be blamed,** for those who are older are worse still. הֵם: they = husbands and fathers. פֵּרֵד, here intransitive: to go aside in order to be alone with the זֹנוֹת. קְדֵשָׁה is one who is consecrated to the service of Astarte, or some similar Canaanitish divinity; women who prostituted themselves for gain. **Offer with the temple-girls:** appear with them at the altar. To such an extent did they carry their impudence and shamelessness. At the end of the strophe want of understanding is again emphasized; it is this that brings them to their fall.

Vers. 15-19 contain a warning to Judah not to participate in Israel's idolatry and shameless conduct, in order to escape the dreadful ruin of the former.

Ver. 15. **If thou, Israel, dost commit whoredom.** Whoredom is here predominantly employed in its metaphorical, but includes also the literal sense. A participation in Israel's idolatry would have been induced by pilgrimages to the shrines of the ten tribes, which still, presumably, were made. Such places were: Gilgal, southwest from Shiloh, now Djidjilia, formerly the seat of a School of the Prophets (2 Kings ii. 1; iv. 38); later a seat of idolatrous worship, and mentioned as such besides in our Prophet, ix. 15; xii. 12, and Amos iv. 4; v. 5; and Bethel, south of Gilgal, near the borders of Israel and Judah; now Betin. This is probably meant here by Beth-Aven, the name being intentionally changed; comp. Amos v. 5; mentioned also in Amos iv. 4 along with Gilgal. **Swear not: by the life of Jehovah.** This cannot be forbidden in itself, for in Deut. vi. 13; xx. 20 it is directly enjoined. Swearing applied to the service of idolatry must be meant, and that in the two places above-mentioned. It appears evident that certain formulas of swearing characteristic of Jehovah's worship were employed in idolatrous service, and that for the purpose of giving to the latter a seeming justification.

Ver. 16. The punishment of Israel is pointed out in order to strengthen the warning to Judah. סֹרֵר, intractable, stubborn, will not be subject to God. God then gives them a free course — bitter irony, — like a sheep on a wide plain: that is, they shall be dispersed far and wide. [Henderson: "The latter hemistich contains the language of irony. As lambs are fond of ranging at large, but are in danger of being lost or devoured, so God threatens to remove the Israelites into a distant and large country, where they would be separated from those with whom they associated in idolatrous worship, and thus be left solitary and exposed as in a wilderness. The phrase, **to feed in a large place,** is elsewhere used in a good sense. Is. xxx. 23." — M.]

Ver. 17. **Joined to idols,** *i. e.*, joined to them so fast that they cannot give them up; therefore probably הַנַּח־לוֹ = let them, that is, keep on, let them serve idols forever, the punishment will not delay. Ephraim was the most powerful of the ten tribes, and therefore often stands for the ten tribes generally. [The other interpretation, not so much favored, but numbering amongst its supporters Jerome, Grotius, Rosenmüller, and Maurer, is that the inhabitants of Judah are commanded to have nothing to do with the idolatry of Israel. This view has also the support of Cowles, but the other is approved by the majority of the English expositors. — M.]

Ver. 18. A difficult one. סֹבֶא liquor, then: a drinking-bout. Fürst assumes besides סוּר to

turn aside, another סרר to become worthless or corrupt, here = to be spoiled. So also Keil [so also Ewald, Horsley, Pusey, and others, with E. V. — M.]. Meier takes it in the usual sense, to be removed, disappear: their carousing has disappeared. He then takes the following as in sense a dependent sentence: the carousing of those who commit whoredom, whose shields, etc. But this is rather artificial. To be sure, the mention of the punishment might be expected here, but it is just as suitable that ver. 18 should describe only their wicked conduct, and ver. 19 pictures them as being seized by a storm-wind in the midst of it. [Henderson translates the first clause: when their carousals are over they indulge in lewdness. Here אִם is supposed to be omitted. Cowles suggests the impossible explanation: He (Ephraim) becomes more apostate from God through strong drink. —M.] Along with their debauchery they commit whoredom, — again in the double sense. [For the construction of the next clause, see Gram. note. — M.] The **shame** which they love is not expressed, but is clearly enough contained in the two preceding hemistichs, therefore = shameful conduct in a moral sense; not = what brings disgrace upon them in its punishment. **Her shields** = her princes, as defenders of the people. "Her" refers to Ephraim, regarded as the wife. The princes are named specially: the whole nation is corrupt from the highest to the lowest.

Ver. 19. In the midst of their sins destruction carries them away like a tempest with irresistible force. צָרַר = bind together; seize upon. It is the prophetic preterite. The tempest is regarded as already present. יֵבֹשׁוּ מִזִּבְחוֹתָם. This means either that they shall be shamed away from their sacrifices, because they were proved not to be able to help them, or that they shall be ashamed of their sacrifices. The sense is that both they and their sacrifices would be put to shame.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. With bold freedom and with holy earnestness the Prophet here displays a picture of the religious and moral corruption of the nation, before which we tremble. He has an eye open for both, and expresses most clearly the inseparable connection between religion and morality. Not only is immorality censured, but the religious depravation also (vers. 1–6, 10–12, 13), so that it may be clearly perceived that this religious decline is the source of the moral corruption, and therefore the (true) religion, that belief in Jehovah is the root of all morality. Observe here how the knowledge of God is exhibited as the essence of religion, and the want of this knowledge as the great error in connection with religion. Apostasy from God therefore consists or is rooted in the loss of the knowledge of Him, which includes not merely a theoretical cognition, but also belief in Him, as the self-revealed God, and the acquaintance and intimacy with Him thence drawn by experience. It is thus that Hosea elsewhere also insists upon the "knowledge of Jehovah" (v. 4; vi. 3, and especially 6). In contrast hereto the idolater is described as one who is "joined to idols" (ver. 17), enters into conjugal intercourse with them. The Prophet, however, does not, in a one-sided fashion, pay exclusive attention to the conduct of the people with respect to religion, but lays just as much stress upon the moral consequences of their religious decline. In his several pictures he brands and rebukes the depravation of morals; want of fidelity and goodness, swearing, lying, stealing, murder, and adultery. Murdering and stealing, probably includes also deeds of violence committed against the poor, defenseless, etc. Special prominence is given to sins against the Sixth [Seventh] Commandment, which, on the basis of idolatry raged so violently in consequence of the terrible increase of unchaste practices during the prevalence of heathen religion and rites. The morally destructive influence of devotion to sensual and fleshly lusts is aptly described in the rebuke of ver. 11: it takes possession of the heart, and the extent of that influence is shown in vers. 13, 14, where the complete destruction of all morality in domestic life is described. A large element of the moral corruption is the influence exerted by the corruption of the priests who make gain of the people's sins (vers. 8, 9), partly also of the prophets. It is also here to be observed how, on the other hand, the moral corruption hastens the religious ruin of the people, drawn as they are ever further from God, and led deeper into idolatry, superstition, and unbelief. Comp. ver. 12 in relation to ver. 11. In ver. 12 b, it is clearly indicated that men, through their estrangement from God and their immoral conduct, lose the power of voluntary self-determination, and become subject to a power, and evil "spirit," which they must follow, and, in the end, against their bitter feelings. Where such universal corruption obtains a spirit will prevail by which the individual is easily borne along with it (comp. also chap. v. 4).

2. Jehovah has a contest with Israel (ver. 1). The expression evidently rests upon the covenant-relation in which two parties assume obligations conditioned on both sides. Israel with God and God with Israel. The relation is therefore a legal one. The one party is bound only so long as the other fulfills his obligations; if one party does not fulfill them, the other may accuse him of an infringement of the compact and institute legal proceedings against him. Thus Jehovah has a "suit-at-law" with Israel, because the latter did not fulfill its obligations. In Joel iv. 2 the expression has a more general application to the judgment which God is to inflict upon the heathen; for they are also related to Jehovah as the Lord of the world. He will not be unjust with them, will not subject them to disadvantages, and will not do them injustice through his people; but they are not to infringe upon his rights, among which is his special relation to Israel. Attacking this, they attack Him also: hence this controversy with them. But alas! there is a dispute between Jehovah and his own people: instead of being united they are divided into two opposing parties. Because the land, shorn of fidelity, goodness, etc., is brought to shame through sin and infamous deeds (vers. 1, 2), it shall mourn and languish (ver. 3) — be visited by drought — as the punishment decreed by God. If this "languishing" is extended even to the unintelligent creation, such a dispensation would express not merely the extent and degree of the visitation, but would show the lower animals to be also included in the punishment. Man, as lord of creation, has by his sin brought punishment upon the rest of the animal world: though these have not sinned, they must suffer with their master on account of his guilt. The punishment is elsewhere also set closely parallel to the guilt: in ver. 9 and especially in ver. 6; be-

cause Israel has despised and forgotten God, He shall also despise and forget them. In particular, they show themselves unworthy of the high prerogative of being Jehovah's priest, to which they were really called as being the chosen people.

3. Between Israel and Judah there was always an important distinction morally and religiously. Hence the kingdom of Israel could be held before to the kingdom of Judah as a warning example. And this must be done: for it may easily be understood how the example of Israel was most dangerous to Judah. We feel clearly, when the Prophet utters the warning: "If thou dost commit whoredom, O Israel, let not Judah become guilty," how warmly his heart beats for Judah. He regards Judah not merely as a kingdom of kindred origin, but as the one which, after Israel's apostasy, represented alone the people of God, and thus he must all the more desire to have Judah preserved from Israel's ways. The position of a Prophet like Hosea, who was a citizen of the northern kingdom, was peculiar. In the discord that existed between Israel and Judah, such warm sympathy with the one would hardly be expected from a citizen of the other. But with a Prophet of Jehovah theocratic feelings, higher than natural ones, must prevail. In Judah was Jerusalem with the temple; in Judah the House of David ruled; Judah was always comparatively more faithful to God, and that was decisive. His heart must therefore turn towards Judah. He could regard the separation of Israel from Judah, partly in itself and partly on account of its disastrous consequences especially to Israel, which were so clearly manifested, only as something utterly false and unrighteous, as an act of injustice, and would behold the nation only in both kingdoms, so that the theocratic conception was in the deeper sense also the natural one. Yet in this he displayed his patriotism even in respect to his nearer home, just in his earnest testimony against the prevailing corruption, whose consequence he foresaw would be certain ruin. Hosea certainly does not expect this ruin to be averted, but only expects a religious and moral renovation through its influence, with which he could not but see the restoration of the national unity necessarily united. See further No. 4 in the Doctrinal and Ethical section on chaps. v. and vi.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

LUTHER: Ver. 1. Who will stand in the judgment in which he is accused by God? For then it will be no argument of words as before an earthly judge, but we ourselves bring against ourselves the testimony of our consciences as our indictment. What is the source of this evil in the world, that nothing true is found, but everything is done from a false heart, and that nowhere can any evidence of honest kindness be seen? The reason is, because there is no knowledge of God in the land, *i. e.*, because men despise God's Word.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Sin is the great mischief-maker: it sows discord between God and Israel: God's controversies will be pleaded; pleaded by the judgments of his mouth before they are pleaded by the judgments of his hand, that He may be justified in all He doth, and may make it appear that He does not desire the death of sinners. And God's pleadings ought to be attended to, for sooner or later they shall have a hearing. — M.]

Ver. 2. WÜRT. SUMM.: Faithfulness and sincerity among a people are like great and precious jewels in a land. So also are paternal confidence and love and pure and faithful preachers of the Word of God. So there is no greater need than when these things are absent; and especially when God's Word and pure teachers and preachers are wanting. This is the fountain of all evil. For God's Word keeps sin at a distance. Where it is not, or where it is not preached in its simplicity and purity, or men will not be reproved by it, nor follow it, nor amend their ways, there one blood-guiltiness and deadly sin follow after another, and all kinds of evil break in like a flood.

[PUSEY: Speculative and practical knowledge are bound up together, through the oneness of the relation of the soul to God, whether in its thoughts of Him or acts towards Him. Wrong practice corrupts belief, and misbelief corrupts practice. — M.]

Ver. 4. LUTHER: It is not so great an offense for men to sin as for them not to be willing to suffer the reproval of sin. For when they live in such a way as that their hearts have a horror of the cure of their malady, punishment can no longer delay. This sin is the most common of our time. Just look at Christian churches, and you will see everywhere that the teachers are hated for rebuking sin so freely. But this only excites God's wrath more fiercely against us. For not man but God rebukes and challenges the sinner.

Ver. 6. God will not be mocked. Men may reject God, but He is still beside them, and shows that He is there in his judgments. The self-deception of sin: in rejecting God (forgetting his commands) thou doest so as one who is rejected by Him.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Ignorance is so far from being the mother of devotion that it is the mother of destruction.

PUSEY: In an advanced stage of sin, men may come to forget what they once despised. — M.]

Ver. 8. There is nothing more shameful than to draw profit from the sin of our neighbor, and thus to strengthen him in his sin, or become the occasion of his sinning; doubly shameful if we abuse our office and more exalted position to do so.

[PUSEY: What else is to extenuate or flatter sin than to dissemble it, not to see it, not openly to denounce it, lest we lose our popularity, or alienate those who commit it? — M.]

[Ver. 9. MATTHEW HENRY: Sharers in sin must expect to be sharers in ruin. — M.]

[Ver. 10. PUSEY: Single marriage, according to God's law: "they twain shall be one flesh," yields in a nation a larger increase than polygamy. Illicit intercourse God turns to decay. His curse is upon it. — M.]

Ver. 11. LUTHER: These two vices, whoredom and debauchery, so take possession of a man that he does not know what he thinks, speaks, or does. The boy Cyrus in Xenophon admirably says, that wine is mixed with poison. And the saying of Archilochus, with reference to impure love, is well known: —

> "Πολλὴν κατ' ἔρως ἀχλὺν ὀμμάτων ἔχευεν,
> Κλέψας ἐκ στηθέων ἁπαλὰς φρένας."

Comp. Luke xxi. 34; Eph. v. 18.

Ver. 12. LUTHER: The spirit of whoredom is that evil spirit which takes away from men's hearts true thoughts of God, and either perverts their hearts, or entirely subdues them by filling them with trust in the creature, which is true and sheer idolatry. For idolatry does not consist merely in

calling upon idols, but also in trust in our own righteousness, works, and service, in riches and human influence and power. And this, as it is the most common, is also the most harmful idolatry.

[PUSEY: The sins of the fathers descend very often to the children, both in the way of nature, that the children inherit strong temptations to their parents' sin, and by way of example, that they greedily imitate, often exaggerate them. Wouldst thou not have children which thou wouldst wish unborn, reform thyself. — M.]

Ver. 13. WÜRT. SUMM.: Corporeal and spiritual whoredom are commonly united, and mutually dependent. For how should he who does not abhor a departure from God through idolatry, abhor a life abandoned to fleshly lusts? For idolatry is a much greater sin than corporeal indulgence: the one offends against the first table of the law and against God Himself, but the other against the second table and our neighbor.

STARKE: When worship is performed in any other way than God has appointed, God is honored no longer, and idolatry is committed.

Ver. 14. Experience teaches that children are prone to imitate the shameful and unchaste lives of their parents. When such is the case the parents are most responsible; they deserve the chief punishment.

LUTHER: If God gives his Word to men, and they will not receive his instructions, what else should He do with them, than give them up to a reprobate mind, *i. e.*, let them live on according to their own counsel and pleasure, until they finally perish?

[CLARKE: While there is *hope*, there is *correction*.

PUSEY: To be chastened severely for lesser sins is a token of the great love of God toward us. To sin on without punishment is a token of God's extremest displeasure and a sign of reprobation. "Great is the offense, if, when thou hast sinned, thou art undeserving of the wrath of God." — M.]

Ver. 15. PFAFF. BIBELWERK: Ye pious and true believers, let not the ungodly seduce you to follow their steps, but beware of them lest ye also have part in their punishment. But ye sinners, if ye will go on sinning, do not seduce the innocent, and thus heap up the measure of your iniquities. Comp. Gal. v. 9.

[MATTHEW HENRY: The nearer we are to the infection of sin, the more need have we to stand upon our guard. Those that would be steady in their adherence to God must possess themselves with an awe and reverence of God, and always speak of Him with solemnity and seriousness; for those who can make a jest of the true God will make a god of anything. — M.]

Ver. 16. The Prophet employs this simile of a lamb in the desert, because nothing is more pitiable than a little lamb which has lost its shepherd. For the same reason Christ employs this figure of the lost sheep, when He would show the piteous condition of the sinner, and his great compassion towards him.

SCHMIEDER: He who will not submit to the restraints imposed by God, shall obtain a freedom which will at last become most irksome. This applies both to nations and to individuals.

[SCOTT: While sinners obstinately reject the easy yoke of Christ, they are bringing down the heavy load of his vengeance upon themselves.

PUSEY: Woe is it to that man, whom, when he withdraws from Christ's easy yoke, God permits to take the broad road which leadeth to destruction. — M.]

Ver. 19. STARKE: God does indeed bear with sinners in great patience and long-sufferings, and calls them to repentance; but when they do not amend, his punishment is swift. 1 Thess. v. 3.

[PUSEY: So does God, by healthful disappointment, make us ashamed of seeking out of Him those good things which He alone hath, and hath in store for them that love Him. — M.]

B. *An Accusation especially against the Priests and the Royal House. The untheocratic Policy of the Kingdom of Israel in seeking for Help to Assyria and Egypt is denounced.*

CHAPTERS V.–VII.

I. *Mainly against the Priests.*

CHAPTER V. 1–15.

1 Hear this ye Priests,
And give ear, thou House of Israel,
And listen, thou House of the King,
Because the judgment is for you,
And you have been a snare for Mizpah,
And a net spread upon Tabor.
2 And the apostates make slaughter[1] deep [are deeply sunk in slaughter],
And I am a chastening for them all.

3 I know Ephraim,
And Israel is not hidden from me;
For even now hast thou committed whoredom, Ephraim,
Israel is defiled.
4 Their deeds will not suffer[2] (them)
To return to their God.
Because the spirit of whoredom is in their inward parts [their inmost heart]
And they do not know Jehovah.
5 And the pride of Israel testifies to its face,
And Israel and Ephraim will totter, through their guilt,
And Judah will totter with them.
6 With their sheep and cattle
They will go to seek Jehovah,
But will not find Him;
He hath withdrawn Himself from them.
7 They have been faithless to Jehovah,
For they begot strange children;
Now the new moon will consume them
Together with their portions.
8 Blow the horn in Gibeah,
The trumpet in Ramah!
Cry out in Beth-Aven[3]
"Behind thee, O Benjamin!"
9 Ephraim will become a waste
In the day of chastisement,
Among the tribes of Israel
Have I made known what is sure.
10 The princes of Judah have become
Like the removers of land-marks:
I will pour out upon them
My wrath like water.
11 Ephraim is oppressed,
Shattered by judgment,[4]
For it thought good
To follow idol-images.[4]
12 And I (am) like the moth to Ephraim
And like rottenness to the house of Judah.
13 And Ephraim saw its disease,
And Judah its wound,
And Ephraim went to Assyria,
And sent to the warlike monarch;
But he will not be able to heal for you,
And will not remove your wound.
14 For I am like the lion to Ephraim,
And like the young lion to the house of Judah,
I, I will rend and go on (rending)
Will carry away and there will be no deliverer.
15 I will go again to my place,
Until they make expiation (by suffering),
And seek my face;
In their distress they will seek me.

Chapter VI. 1-11.

1 "Come let us return[5] to Jehovah!
For He hath torn, and will heal us,
He hath smitten and will bind us up.
2 He will revive us after two days,
On the third day He will raise us up,
That we may live before Him.

3 Let us know, follow on to know, Jehovah:
Like the dawn his coming is sure,
And He shall come like the rain for us,
Like the latter rain (which) waters the earth."

4 What shall I do to thee, Ephraim?
What shall I do to thee, Judah?
For your love is like the morning cloud,
And like the dew, vanishing soon away.
5 Therefore I have smitten[5] (them) through the Prophets,
And slain them with the words of my mouth,
And my judgment goes forth like light.[6]
6 For I delight in love and not sacrifice,
And in the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
7 Yet they, like Adam, have broken the covenant,
They were faithless to me then.
8 Gilead is (like) a city of evil-doers,
Besmeared with blood.
9 And as the robber lurks,[7]
So (does) a band of priests.
Upon the highway they murder (those going) to Schechem,
Yea they commit wickedness.
10 In the house of Israel
I beheld an abomination, a horror:
Ephraim committed whoredom,
Israel (is) defiled.
11 For thee, also, Judah, a harvest is prepared,[8]
When I turn the captivity of my people.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 2.— שַׁחֲטָה is probably the Inf. Piel from שָׁחַט. [It is the inf. absol. with ה paragogic. The regular form would be שַׁחֲטָה, but the Kamets-Hhatuph is changed to Patach. See Green, *Gr.*, § 119, 3. Its construction with the finite verb follows a peculiar idiom, common in Hebrew. The literal translation is: they have made deep to slaughter. Comp. Is. xxxi. 6. Ewald, comparing with ix. 9, holds that our word is a false reading for שׁחתה, but there is no reason why the Prophet should not have used both expressions. — M.]

[2 Ver. 4. — E. V. and most Anglo-American expositors adopt another construction in the first hemistich, rendering: they will not frame their doings. Horsley, with the best Continental critics, prefers the rendering which is given in the margin of E. V. and adopted by Schmoller. Pusey is undecided, and indeed it is difficult to determine which is the true view; for no importance is to be attached to the objection of Henderson, that יִתְּנוּ would require an object expressed if the construction last referred to were the correct one. — M.]

3 Ver. 8. — Before בֵּית אָוֶן supply בְּ.

4 Ver. 11. — רְצוּץ is in the construct. state before מִשְׁפָּט. It is not = broken, harassed in law, which is unsuitable here, but we have a *genitivus efficientis*, and מִשְׁפָּט = judgment, as in ver. 1: crushed by judgment. On the combination הוֹאִיל הָלַךְ, see Ewald, § 285, 6. The words are coördinate. [See Green, § 269. This construction is frequent in Hosea; comp. i. 6; vi. 4. — M.] Fürst takes צַו in our passage = צִיּוּן, a pillar, especially a finger-post. He, however, has the conjecture that it = צוֹא, צוֹאָה, filth, dirt, and this = שִׁקּוּצִים, גִּלּוּלִים, idols, and would then take הוֹאִיל from יאל, to be foolish (of which the Niphal occurs) = he was foolish, and followed after filth (filthy idol-worship). A further conjecture is that it may be an Ephraimitish mode of writing שָׁוְא (Job xv. 31) = nothing, vanity. LXX.: ὀπίσω τῶν ματαίων.

[5 Chap. vi. ver. 1-3. — The true construction of the various sentences in these verses is probably as follows: The first line of ver. 1 contains an exhortation, the remainder of that and the following verse consisting of arguments in support of it; and the first line of ver. 3 contains a parallel exhortation, followed in the remainder of the verse, by parallel arguments. A glance at the verses in their connection will show the appropriateness of this general view. That the opposite is true of the construction adopted in E. V. and by the English expositors generally, according to which the opening of ver. 3 is regarded as a continuation of the reasons for returning, is evident both from the unfitness of that line as an argument, and from the consideration that all the pleas adduced in all three verses are drawn from expectations of favor from God Himself. The form of the Heb. pret. (with ה paragogic) here employed, also confirms this view. But there is no need of holding, according to the view preferred by Schmoller, that any of the intermediate verbs introduce an exhortation. This both weakens the force of the array of pleas successively adduced and mars the regular and beautiful structure of the section. נָשׁוּבָה (ver. 1), נֵדְעָה and נִרְדְּפָה, (ver. 3), therefore, being paragogic futures (Green, §§ 97, 1, 264), are cohortatives, and the only cohortatives in the section. — M.]

6 Ver. 5. — The object of חָצַבְתִּי is to be supplied by anticipation from הֲרַגְתִּים. Instead of וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ אוֹר, the punctation and division of the words is probably to be changed according to the ancient versions, and וּמִשְׁפָּטִי כָּאוֹר to be read. The Masoretic reading is encumbered with too many difficulties.

7 Ver. 9. — חַכֵּי is for חַכֵּה = חַכּוֹת [constr. inf. Piel, equivalent to a participial noun. It is an imitation of the Chaldee. Henderson conjectures that the form is for מְחַכֵּי, Piel. Part. — שֶׁכְמָה. The translation of E. V.: by consent, has arisen from the Targum rendering, כְּתַף חַד: one shoulder. This view is now almost altogether abandoned — M.]

8 Ver. 11. — שָׁת is used impersonally, being equivalent to a passive sense [one sets, prepares a harvest = a harvest is prepared. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The beginning in ver. 1 (corresponding to the opening of chap. iv.) shows that the discourse here commences anew. Though connected with chap. iv., this chapter contains an accusation and threatening more definitely directed against the priests along with the king and his counsellors and princes, yet without being confined to this, for the discourse again becomes general, applying to the whole people. Along with idolatry which here again becomes prominent as the sin of Israel (especially in chap. v.) and gross sins among the people (deceit, robbery, murder, chap. vi.), the conduct of the court is afterwards specially reproved, but particularly the false policy of seeking help in Assyria and Egypt (which itself presupposes the beginning of the kingdom's decay). Chap. vi. is inseparably connected with chap. v. But chap. vii. is also related to both of them, for a new section begins only with chap. viii. (See Introduction.) A single central and controlling idea, however, can hardly be indicated in these two chapters, or in the second part of the book generally. The discourse is too excited, moving suddenly from one thought to another, especially from accusation to threatening, and *vice versa*.

Ver. 1. **Hear this, ye priests.** It is doubtful whether זֹאת refers to the foregoing, but it is not improbable that it does. The solemn discourse just ended would now be applied to the hearts of those specially addressed here, and the continuation of the discourse would then be attached to it. **House of the king** = the royal family, or possibly those who surrounded him ordinarily. The king referred to cannot be with certainty determined. Keil conjectures Zachariah or Menahem, or both. According to 2 Kings xv. 19 f. the resort to Assyria would suit Menahem better than Zachariah. **For the judgment is for you.** This refers specially, according to the sequel, to the Priests and the Court. [" The judgment " is that announced in the preceding chapter; the special application is made here. — M.] The rulers of the people are compared to a snare and net. The birds whom they have taken or allured to destruction, are the people. Mizpah cannot be the Mizpah strictly so called in the tribe of Benjamin, but must be = מִצְפָּה and that = מִצְפֵּה גִלְעָד an elevated place in Gilead, perhaps identical with רָמַת מִצְפֶּה in the tribe of Dan. **Tabor,** on this side the Jordan, would correspond to the elevated point on the other side. These two places are probably selected as prominent points to represent the whole country; for it is not known that they were places of sacrifice. Keil conjectures that they are chosen in this image because they were places suitable for bird-catching.

Ver. 2. הֶעְמִיק, to make deep. Literally: they have made slaughter deep = they have sunk deep in it. **Slaughter** might of itself be understood as murder, but the thought is carried further. שָׁחַט is usually employed of the slaughter of beasts for sacrifice, and thus is most suitable here according to the foregoing, where the evil influence of the rulers upon the nation is spoken of, and this consisted in the idolatry which they saw them practice. But this sacrificing is intentionally called only slaying, and suggested by it. שֵׂטִים a ἅπ. λεγ. is uncertain. The most probable explanation makes it = סֵטִים, apostates. This is then the subject of the sentence, which would be rendered: the apostates are deeply sunk in murder. Keil, with others, takes it quite differently: transgressions, more literally: deviations. He explains שַׂחֲטָה after שָׁחוּט, 1 Kings x. 16 f.: to stretch, stretch along; therefore: deviations; they have made deep to stretch out = they have carried their transgressions very far. But what a tortuous mode of expression: to stretch out deviations! [The Anglo-American Commentators generally adopt the former view, rendering: revolters, or: apostates. — M.]

Ver. 3. The second half of this verse tells what God discerns in Ephraim and Israel. עַתָּה: now, at this very moment, pointing out, as an actual fact, that which at present lies open to the eye of God. [Henderson: " To express an assertion more strongly, the Hebrews put it first in the form of an affirmative, and afterwards in the form of a negative." — M.]

Ver. 4. **Their deeds will not allow, etc.** Their works stand in the way of their returning to God; for they are not isolated things, but are the expression of their inner nature, and that is held securely by the spirit of whoredom (iv. 12), as by a demoniacal power which has stifled the knowledge of God. They are therefore not free — not lords over themselves, but slaves. [The rendering adopted here is that given in the margin of the English Bible, and approved by the majority of the Expositors of Continental Europe, ancient and modern, and by Horsley among the English ones. But there he stands alone, all other Anglo-American translators adopting the rendering: they will not frame their doings to return to the Lord. They have been led to this view by the mistaken notion that the other translation involved a grammatical impossibility. See Gram. Note. — M.].

Ver. 5. **The pride of Israel** according to some, denotes God, as One in whom Israel might have

pride. The sense would then be that God, by his judgments testifies in the very face of Israel. But such an explanation is forced. The natural impression, on reading the words, is rather that Israel and its conduct is spoken of. Therefore the words are to be taken as they stand; the pride of Israel testifies to its face, namely, when the punishment of such pride is being suffered. It will be then felt what it is to reject Jehovah in presumptuous self-reliance (Wünsche). **Judah also totters with them.** In iv. 15 Judah is warned not to be partaker in Israel's guilt; but this must have been done because such participation was already begun, or foreseen as about to be assumed. On the other hand in i. 7 Judah's destiny is distinguished definitely from that of Israel. [Henderson and others account for this seeming discrepancy by assuming that this chapter was written at a period considerably subsequent to that of the utterance of the last. But the evidence of the connection between them is too strong to admit of this supposition. The solution given above is therefore probably the correct one. — M.]

Ver. 6. **They shall go with their flocks and with their herds.** The fruitlessness of Israel's sacrifices without a mind answering to the offering, is here shown (comp. vi. 6; Is. i. 11 ff.; Jer. vii. 21 ff.; Ps. xl. 7; l. 8 ff.).

Ver. 7. בָּגַד, to act faithlessly, especially of the infidelity of a wife to her husband. The proof (כִּי) of such unfaithfulness of Israel to Jehovah, the Husband, is then given. Instead of bearing children to God in covenant with Him, they had rather, by their illicit intercourse with idols, begotten strange, illegitimate children, children not belonging to the household, *i. e.*, children whom the Lord cannot acknowledge as his own. The punishment is then announced: **The new moon will devour them.** "The new moon is the festal season on which sacrifices were offered, and is here employed for the sacrifices themselves. The meaning is: your festal sacrifices are so far from bringing deliverance as rather to induce your ruin" (Keil). The sentence must, at the same time, be understood in a temporal sense = the time will soon come when they will perish, as also appears clearly from ver. 8. **Their portions** are their possessions, part of which they brought as offerings.

Ver. 8. The judgment is seen in the Spirit as being already inflicted. The invasion of the enemy is to be announced by the horn and the trumpet. Gibeah and Ramah were most suitable for giving signals on account of their lofty situation. Both were on the northern boundary of Benjamin. Thus Judah is already menaced (see ver. 5), and Israel actually occupied. הָרִיעַ, to raise a shout = to sound the alarm in danger. Beth-aven again = Bethel; בְּ is to be supplied. **Behind thee, Benjamin.** The danger which is signaled, the enemy, is coming. He is already close behind thee.

Ver. 9. Israel shall assuredly be destroyed, and permanently also: נֶאֱמָנָה = enduring, that is, lasting misfortune (comp. Deut. xxviii. 59). Others make it = true, what will surely be fulfilled. [The latter view is preferable, and is approved by most expositors. — M.]

Ver. 10. **Like the removers of landmarks.** Is this to be taken literally? It is certain that we are not to think of hostile seizures of the territory of Israel, but the *tertium comp.* is the curse which, according to Deut. xxvii. 17, is laid upon the removal of a neighbor's landmark = they have done something worthy of cursing. The curse attending the removal of the landmarks must therefore be regarded here as something well known. The question then arises: what is it that they have done incurring a curse. Keil and Hengstenberg think that a spiritual removal of boundaries is indicated, a subversion of the bounds of justice, namely, by participating in the guilt of Ephraim which they did by breaking down the barriers between Jehovah and the idols. And it is true that the princes of Judah are to be regarded as in a special sense divided off as against Israel and its idolatry, by virtue of the true faith which still prevailed in Judah as contrasted with Israel. The sense would then be: The princes of Judah, by their favoring idolatry, by this transgressing of spiritual limits, have become like those who remove the land-marks of fields, and thus become subject to the curse. God's anger will seize upon them like a full stream of water. Comp. Ps. lxix. 25; lxxix. 6; Jer. x. 25.

Vers. 11–15 declare that even Assyria cannot help, and that the vanity of all help outside of God, drives Israel to Him.

Ver. 11. עָשׁוּק and רְצוּץ are "united also in Deut. xxviii. 33 to denote the complete subjugation of Israel under enemies in the event of apostasy from God" (Keil). צַו occurs only here and in Is. xxviii. 10. In the latter case, at all events, it = מִצְוָה, command. So many here also: a human statute [" in contrast to the ordinances of God "] alluding to the worship of calves (Keil). [See Textual note.]

Ver. 12. A moth and rottenness are symbols of destroying influences. The moth is alluded to in the same way in Is. l. 9; li. 8; Ps. xxxix. 12; both united in Job xiii. 28. Such influences also destroy slowly but surely: *Certa Dei judicia* (Calvin).

Ver. 13. חָלְיוֹ and מְזוֹר, injury and wound, hardly denote religious and moral depravation (Keil); for it would scarcely have been said that Ephraim perceived this, but the judgment of God mentioned in ver. 12, which according to the image there employed is not one which brings sudden ruin, but a more secret corruption, of which, indeed, moral depravation forms a part, but only as a judgment of God. That a divine judgment is intended, is clear from what is said of the vanity of help that is sought, especially in the sequel, and from the ground assigned for its insufficiency in ver. 14. Assyria is here named for the first time. In the subsequent chapters the Prophet frequently recurs to the false policy of seeking help from Assyria. Only Ephraim is named because Israel is the main subject. Judah is referred to only incidentally. יָרֵב, a contender, an epithet devised by the Prophet to denote the Assyrian king.

Ver. 14. They can as little defend themselves from God's judgments as they can from the attack of lions. (Comp. xiii. 7; Is. v. 29; Deut. xxxii. 39).

Ver. 15. The figure of the lion is continued. As the lion, without fear of being attacked, withdraws into his lair, so the Lord withdraws into heaven; none can or dare call Him to account. **Until they make expiation** = suffer. The suf-

fering shall drive them to God. שַׁחֵר = seek earnestly. Comp. ii. 9 and Deut. iv. 29, 30, where comp. also the expression בַּצַּר לְךָ.

Chap. vi. ver. 1. **Come let us return to Jehovah.** The words are plainly connected with the last words of chap. v. where a seeking of God on the part of the people is mentioned as the aim and consequence of the divine judgment. The opinion is, therefore, the most natural (so already the LXX.) that they are just the expression of that seeking, that in them Israel announces its resolve, and immediately thereafter the hope of favor on the ground of the return. The view of Keil is less suitable, that we have here an exhortation addressed by the Prophet in the name of God to the people whom God has smitten. The words are only and naturally put in the mouths of those who, punished for their sins, would return to God. [The Anglo-American Commentators, generally, adopt the view here advocated. Henderson gives the additional plea that the bearing of ver. 5 favors the hypothesis. — M.] **For He hath torn,** etc. (comp. v. 14). Strong faith. The Lord who had spoken with such threatenings, and such implacable severity, would yet give salvation (and not Assyria, ver. 13). This would also be true if the words וירפאנו, ויחבשׁנו are taken as expressing a wish, which is readily suggested by a frequent usage of ו with the future: and may He heal us, etc. (so also in the following sentences). — כי. The resolve to return would then be strengthened by the calamity which God sends. If דיחבשׁנו be taken not as expressing a wish but simply a hope the determination to return would rather be strengthened by this hope, as the healing, etc., would be the fruit of the return. [On the grammatical and logical connection of the different clauses of the first three verses, see Gram. note. — M.] An allusion to Deut. xxxii. 39 can hardly be mistaken, especially if we look to ver. 2.

Ver. 2. **He will revive us again,** etc. The definite limits: two days, and: on the third day, hold out the prospect of the speedy and sure revival of Israel. "Two and three days are very short periods of time; and the linking of two numbers following the one upon the other, expresses the certainty of what is to take place within the period named, just as in the so-called *number-sayings* in Amos i. 3; Job v. 19; Prov. vi. 16; xxx. 15, 18, in which the last and greatest number expresses the highest or utmost extent of the matter dealt with" (Keil). Both the Rabbinical interpretations of these numbers (*e. g.*, that they relate to the three captivities, the Egyptian, the Babylonish, and the Roman) and the Christian, according to which Christ's resurrection on the third day is indicated, are naturally inadmissible. The latter is excluded even by the words themselves. Israel is the subject of discourse: "it is torn, smitten, slain"; nothing is said of the exile itself, but in general there is set forth the termination of its existence as a people through the divine judgment (which to be sure was brought to pass by means of the exile). Israel expects, in the event of conversion, to be delivered from this situation and to be restored, and that speedily. It is naturally not the awakening of the physically dead that is announced; but it is a significant fact, that such an awakening is employed to illustrate the restoration of Israel, for it may lead us to infer that such a belief lay not far from the Prophet's mind. Comp. for our verse, Is. xxxvi. 19 ff. (and for the whole section, vers. 16–21), and especially the well-known vision in Ez. xxxvii. 1–14. (See further No. 4 in the Doctrinal Section.) [Comp. the remarks of Delitzsch on Job xix. 25 ff. in his *Commentary* on that book, which contain the true principle of interpretation in such cases, and substantially agree with the method approved by Schmoller here. Henderson and Cowles agree in excluding any but an historic allusion, while Horsley and Pusey maintain the allegorical interpretation, the former seeing a "no very obscure, though but an oblique, allusion to our Lord's resurrection on the third day," the latter repudiating any other application, and carrying out the analogy to the extreme possibilities of fanciful conjecture. The explanation of the two and three days given above is probably the true one. With it Newcome and Henderson agree. Cowles suggests an allusion to the duration of the pestilence in Israel after David's census of the people, and thinks that besides there "may be a tacit allusion to the fact that three days is about the extent of human endurance under extreme privations and hardships." — M.] **That we may live before Him:** "under his protecting shelter and favor, comp. Gen. xvii. 18" (Keil).

Ver. 3. **Let us know, pursue the knowledge of, Jehovah.** Keil rightly makes the verse parallel with ver. 1, as a further appeal. The expression נִרְדְּפָה especially indicates an appeal, or, according to our view, a self-exhortation. The zeal and earnestness of the return is thus presented. "Know" must be taken in the sense of iv. 1, 6. Jehovah had become an unknown, a strange God to the (idolatrous) people. Such knowledge has thus a practical aim, to acknowledge, to serve Him. The following words declare what is hoped for as the fruit of that knowledge: **His coming forth is sure like the dawn,** etc. Jehovah will appear bringing salvation. This is set forth under the figures of the daybreak and a fertilizing rain. The appearing of Jehovah is denoted as a rising by the image of the dawn (יָצָא, usually employed of the sun). The transition from night to day is set forth. Comp. Is. lviii. 8. **And He will come as the rain for us,** etc., *i. e.*, reviving and refreshing. "In Deut. xi. 14 (comp. xxviii. 12 and Lev. xxvi. 4, 5), the rain, or the early and latter rain, is mentioned among the blessings which the Lord will bestow upon his people if they shall serve Him with the whole heart. This promise the Lord will so fulfill in the case of his newly-revived people, that He himself will refresh them like a fertilizing rain" (Keil).

Ver. 4. **What shall I do to thee, Ephraim?** It is common to break off the discourse here, wrongly, with ver. 3. It is supposed that there is here a first section containing a promise, to which the promise in chaps. xi. and xiv. correspond, and that a new section begins in ver. 4 with a new objurgatory discourse (Keil). But, in the first place, vers. 1–3 do not really contain a promise of the Prophet, or of God through the Prophet, but only a hope of the people themselves. And, in the second place, ver. 4 is too closely connected with the preceding (not as a promise of God attached to the foregoing), according to Luther's translation: how will I do thee good, etc.? For עשׂה does not mean: to do good, and חַסְדְּכֶם is not = the mercy which I will show you, and, especially, the comparison of God's favor to the morning cloud and

the vanishing dew would be unsuitable. The words rather contain a bitter complaint of Israel's inconstancy, and that suggested just by the preceding words. A good and joyful feeling was there expressed. If Israel only had now such a feeling as was expressed in the words which the Prophet puts in their mouth all would be well! But Israel is as inconstant as God is constant. Its goodness is as the morning cloud and the swiftly vanishing dew. Both the dew and the morning cloud are figures of evanescence. The dew has an allusion to the rain, with which Jehovah is compared by way of contrast; and the morning cloud disappearing so soon, points back to the dawn which surely brings the day. חסד, love, is naturally, on account of God's complaint against the inconstancy of the people, to be understood of love towards God. Yet it may also be taken generally, and made to include man's love to his neighbor as well. What shall I do to thee? = how shall I further punish thee? Then follows what God would yet do.

Ver. 5. **Therefore** — because the character of Israel was such as was described in ver. 4. **The words of my mouth** is parallel to **the Prophets**, because the latter proclaimed God's purposes; and the חצב was performed by the prophets just so far as they uttered the words of God. חָצַב, to hew out or off. The figure is that of hard stone or wood to which, by hewing, the right shape is given, and obdurate Israel is conceived of as having been subjected to such treatment for its good through the objurgations of the prophets. Similarly Luther after Jerome: to plane off.—The expression of the second member is stronger still: **I slew them.** A slaying influence is ascribed to God's word. He gives to the prophets to announce death and ruin. In the words that follow we are probably to change the reading, and translate = and my judgment (goes forth) as light. [See Textual note. — M.] The image may have been chosen with reference to ver. 4: Since your love is like the morning cloud and the dew, vanishing quickly, when the sun rises, I will make such a sun rise as you do not wish. The judgment is here compared to a sunrise, which is elsewhere rather an image of a gracious visitation (comp. ver. 3), perhaps in the sense that judgment reveals sins, the works of darkness, in their true light (comp. Eph. v. 13).

Ver. 6 and the following ones confirm more definitely what is said in ver. 5. What God wishes is *love* and the *knowledge of God*. The knowledge of God (= piety here) goes back to the essential idea of חֶסֶד as embracing in its general sense, love to God and man, though the latter here preponderates. In this sense Jesus cites it in Matt. ix. 13; xii. 7. On the meaning, comp. No. 5 in the Doctrinal and Ethical section.

Ver. 7. Yet the conduct of the people is just the opposite of what God desires. **But they, like Adam, have broken the covenant**. The reference is to Ephraim and Judah, not to the priests. And, therefore, כְּאָדָם does not express a contrast to these =ordinary men. It would rather indicate a contrast to Ephraim and Judah as the people of God. But this thought is quite remote. Viewing the passage without prejudice, the usual explanation is seen to be the most natural: like Adam. Allusion is thus made to Gen. iii. Adam's sin was the violation of a covenant: for with the command laid upon Adam, God entered into a relation with him, which, in accordance with the analogies of later agreements made with mankind, might be called a covenant. Such covenant-breaking is a בגד, a breach of fidelity. **Then they were unfaithful to Me,** as it were, pointing with the finger to the well-known places of idolatrous worship, *e. g.*, Bethel. Israel's position, therefore, is one of apostasy from God. Israel contradicts its destiny, which was, to be God's people. In fact, the verse expresses the want of that one thing which God desires, the want of the "knowledge of God." Being a condition of intimacy with God, it is lost in apostasy from Him. Therefore, also, there is no חֶסֶד ver. 8 ff. [Newcome, Pusey, and Cowles prefer the interpretation that understands Adam to be meant. Henderson rejects it, and prefers the rendering: they (are) like men (who) break a covenant. To this it might be objected, first, that this, which is in any case, a paraphrase, is not the natural translation of the words. If it were the author's meaning, every reader, contemporary with him or otherwise, would have mistaken it, on the first view, at least. In the second place, such a periphrastic expression would be a very feeble, as well as unusual, way of conveying the notion that they had broken God's covenant, in marked contrast to the directness of the charge in the second member of the verse. He objects to the other view that nowhere is there mention made of God's entering into a covenant with Adam. But this objection is not valid if it appears that the transaction in which God and Adam were the parties was really of the nature of a covenant. And that term "is a concise and correct mode of asserting a plain Scriptural fact, namely, that God made to Adam a promise suspended upon a condition, and attached to disobedience a certain penalty. This is what in Scriptural language is meant by a covenant." (Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 117.) His other objection is trivial, that with the exception of three doubtful passages, of which the present is one, Adam is not used in the Old Testament after the first chapter of Genesis (he probably meant the fifth) as a proper name, nor is any reference made to our first parents. The nearest parallel to our passage is Job xxxi. 33: if I have concealed my transgression like Adam; of the correctness of which rendering there can be no reasonable doubt. Comp. Delitzsch on that passage in his *Commentary on Job*. — M.]

Ver. 8. **Gilead** might be taken here as the name of a city. But it never occurs as such, only as the name of a district on the east of the Jordan. It must therefore be assumed that the name of the district is applied here to the chief city, Mizpah. Or we might remain by the notion of the district, and the expression would then be a comparison = All Gilead is, as it were, a city of evil-doers, as full of them as a city is of men. — עֲקֻבָּה. עָקֹב is a foot-mark, therefore: tracked with blood, full of bloody tracks. Here murderous actions are indicated without being definitely named.

Ver. 9. But the most shameful transactions occur in the west of the Jordan. Even priests act like robbers. גְּדוּד is a predatory band, a band of freebooters or robbers, therefore אִישׁ גְּדוּדִים = a companion of such bands, a robber. **Like the lurking of robbers** =as robbers lurk, **so lurk a company of priests, they murder on the way to Shechem.** Travellers are surprised by them

on the way to Shechem. Shechem was a City of Refuge. Perhaps those are meant who sought refuge there. The priests are by many thought to be residents of Shechem. But Shechem was a Levitical, not a sacerdotal, city. The expression would then refer not to those dwelling within the city, but to those without, who fall upon persons going to Shechem. Bethel was rather the seat of the priests. Keil therefore supposes: "The way to Shechem is mentioned as a place of murders and bloody deeds, because the road to Bethel, the principal seat of worship belonging to the ten tribes, from Samaria the capital, and in fact from the northern part of the kingdom generally, lay through this city. Pilgrims to the feasts for the most part took this road; and the priests, who were taken from the dregs of the people, appear to have lain in wait for them, to rob, or, in case of resistance, to murder." More strictly speaking, it must have been done on the return from Bethel to Shechem. The allusion is evidently to a definite event unknown to us. The same remark applies to the following words. כִּי is climactic. זִמָּה = shame, perhaps, unchastity. [This word does not mean shame or dishonor. It is primarily a device or plan either evil or good (comp. Job xvii. 11), though usually the former. The next meaning is wickedness; then specially a crime resulting from unchastity. For the connection between the two meanings see Lev. xviii. 11. — M.]

Ver. 10. The consequences of the preceding. Probably both corporeal and spiritual whoredom are included.

Ver. 11. A threatening is appended against Judah also. "Judah also" is guilty. The harvest is as elsewhere an image of judgment, a cutting down (comp. also Is. xxviii. 24 ff.) **When I shall turn the captivity of my people.** This appears, on the contrary, to refer to a deliverance, and therefore to be a promise. But it must be remembered that the judgment has for its aim the deliverance of God's people (עַמִּי) as a whole. But such deliverance is effected only through the judgment that falls upon the several parts, first upon Israel and then upon Judah. The meaning therefore is, when Israel, the Ten Tribes, shall have received its punishment and been restored, Judah also will be punished. [This paraphrase of the passage does not agree with historical fact, and must therefore be rejected. The true view seems to be that of Keil: "שׁוּב שְׁבוּת never means: to bring back the captives, but in every passage where it occurs simply: to turn the captivity and that in the figurative sense of *restitutio in integrum*. 'My people,' *i. e.*, the people of Jehovah is not Israel of the Ten Tribes but the covenant nation as a whole. Consequently 'the captivity of my people' is the misery into which Israel (of the twelve tribes) had been brought through its apostasy from God, not the Assyrian or Babylonian Exile, but the misery brought about by the sins of the people. God could avert this only by judgments, through which the ungodly were destroyed and the penitent converted. Consequently the following is the thought which we obtain from the verse: When God shall come to punish that He may root out ungodliness, and restore his people to their true destiny, Judah will also be visited with the judgment." — M.] The whole is not to be regarded as a promise, or the harvest as a harvest of joy. Nor is it necessary to attract the second hemistich of ver. 11 to the first verse of chap. vii. (*e. g.*, Meier).

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. Prophetic rebuke does not merely not spare rulers and kings: it is specially directed against them. This follows from the conviction of the high vocation the monarchy had to fulfill. It is the bearer of the magisterial office, and as such must administer and guard the divine law, and must therefore care both for the purity of God's worship and the administration of justice. And if it neglects or directly violates its obligation, despises the divine law, and even introduces idolatry, perverts justice, exercises injustice or leaves it unpunished, it becomes recreant to God, from whom it receives its authority, and incurs his punishment. This, the Prophet, as God's messenger, announces, and his voice is therefore at first a voice of warning in order to bring it back to the true path. But the Prophet arraigns not merely neglect or violation of the obligations entailed by the office as such, but also the personal conduct of the bearers of the office, with a due appreciation of the influence which they exercise by word and still more by deed, in virtue of their high position.

2. "In all inroads of sin and corruption we are to look not merely at the outward work, but at the power of darkness, the spirit, that lies behind as their most dexterous and astute controlling influence, which will maintain most craftily its right and cause; comp. ver. 4" (Rieger).

3. RIEGER: "So long as man under divine chastisement, supposes that he can find help and mitigate his misfortunes by trust in the creatures, he wanders off as though in a trackless wilderness, from the living fountain, and might preclude himself from the most essential self-humbling, the knowledge of his guilt. But when God presses upon him with his hand and he has no deliverer, then is quickened in his heart a little seed implanted there before by God's good hand; and thus the love of God is like a man who has sown seed in his land; he goes away to his place, and depends on that which the seed will produce in time, and after the rough winter." Most beautiful is the believing assurance with which the Prophet makes the chastened express their hope of favor if they should return to God. (This same hope is expressed in Deut. xxxii. 39.) Thus restoration after past destruction is hoped for, and the blessedness of this restoration is further and happily described by comparing the returning favor of God to the rising dawn and the descending rain of harvest, as beneficent and refreshing as the one, as fertilizing and fraught with as rich blessings as the other, it spreads its influence. Such a visitation of mercy was most fully vouchsafed through the Messiah; He was the Day-star from on high; in Him came to us the Son of God in the flesh to diffuse upon us the Holy Spirit like fertilizing rain. He brings, therefore, the true healing for the bruised, the true binding up of the wounds for the smitten, the true reviving for the slain — all under the condition (presupposed by the Prophet) of a penitent returning to God. That the Prophet himself, in putting these words into the mouths of the penitent, thought of the Messiah, can not be maintained. We must apply here also canon laid down at chaps. i.–ii. that the fulfillment took place under the Messiah, but in another and higher sense than the Prophet fancied, that the words inspired by the Spirit of God had a further range than the Prophet knew. The "revival" and the "upraising" imply primarily a restoration of Is-

rael, and we have in Ez. xxxvii. 1–14 the completed picture of which our short sentence affords the outlines. But if the true restoration of God's people has been and is now being accomplished only through Christ, we can go a step further, and show that the revival, proceeding from Him, which is essentially a partaking in a new spiritual life, finds its completion only in the awakening even from corporeal death to the enjoyment of eternal life, of those who have been spiritually quickened by Him. If we, therefore, from the stand-point of the New Testament, find in the words of our Prophet here an allusion to this, we are not really so far wrong as might seem. Nay, as the Prophet certainly speaks of a reviving in a spiritual sense, so he must take that image from an actual revival of the dead, as he took the preceding ones in ver. 1 from the binding and healing of a wound, and this idea cannot be so remote from his language, even if we can say no more (Isaiah in xxvi. 19 evidently goes further). As regards the specification of time: on the third day, which so naturally suggests Christ's resurrection, — the coincidence is certainly not accidental so far as the resurrection on the third day is to be regarded as a rising in "a very brief space of time." He was, indeed, to die, but not to remain in the state of the dead any longer than was necessary, so to speak, in order to make his death an indubitable fact; rather, as the "First Fruits," He should be soonest brought out of death by the mighty working of the Father, and it would thus be shown how completely God's wrath, borne by Him, was quenched, and God's favor restored. On the third day the sun of mercy thus rose even here. And upon this revival of the Messiah on the third day, is conditioned the revival of sinners, proceeding from Him, in time and eternity. We must, therefore, regard this passage of prophecy as at least significant from a New Testament standpoint, nor do we err if we say, that there is here contained more than the Prophet could conceive; it is a divine word resembling a seed of corn which does not simply represent what it actually is (even the most precious stone does no more than this), but conceals in itself something else far higher, the germ which it enfolds.

4. Chap. vi. 5. There is expressed here a clear consciousness of the aim and lofty position of prophecy. It is above all not something incidental, but is embraced organically in the divine economy. Its special mission is fulfilled when the people of God forget their calling, and disregarding the voice of their own conscience, no longer seize the true path, and, having already inwardly apostatized, attain only to weak resolves, which are never fulfilled (ver. 4). Then God appears before his people, and sends them the prophets, who are, so to speak, a conscience standing outside of them. Through them He speaks the "words of his mouth" and rebukes his people. He announces through them his judgment; their words of rebuke themselves are a punishment to the people, at all events, a punishment by words before the punishment by deeds is sent, but yet essentially identical with it, inasmuch as it was intended to produce deep sorrow, to touch the inner man, and to bring painfully to the consciousness criminal apostasy from God, and has thus the same aim as actual punishment has. Thus the sending of the prophets appears in one passage as a punishment; therefore also the expression which speaks of God's hewing and slaying through them is employed, and there is conjoined with it in one line the "rising of judgment like the sun," which may be understood of the efficiency of the prophets themselves. It is declared in such passages as xii. 11 that prophecy had in itself a more general significance, as it effected God's revelation to the people, and brought Him into close relations with them, and was, in so far, an element of his dispensation of mercy. And, apart from this, as Hosea directly shows, it had not only a legal but also an evangelical aspect by its vocation as proclaiming God's faithfulness, in virtue of which He had not rejected his people but had destined for them a great deliverance. Here, however, it is occupied with the race for which it was specially designed, and for them it preached punishment by holding up before them the law they had so contemptuously violated; it became a chastening rod through the Word, and it was to hold out to the people the prospect of the future salvation only through the medium of punishment, and must as its main duty "cut to pieces" and "slay." The preaching of the New Covenant has, on the other hand, as its main duty, an evangelical mission, which must never be ignored. But still it cannot dispense with the preaching of the Law. It must, even there, recur to that as its next duty; for the Law is the true παιδαγωγὸς εἰς Χριστόν.

The worthlessness of sacrifice as a mere *opus operatum* is most distinctly emphasized by prophecy in opposition to the false esteem in which it was held, which was a token of religious and moral ruin, going hand in hand with an empty service of forms and outward works. Sacrifice, in general, was, as it seems, regarded as a good because a religious work, even when it was not performed in the strict legal manner, but was associated with calf and idol-worship, and therefore with a transgression of the Law (as in our context it is not legal sacrifice that is spoken of, the address being to the kingdom of the ten tribes). In this they wished to honor Jehovah, or pretended to do so. Comp. ver. 6. In that passage the worthlessness of the outward sacrifice, which was only in form a seeking of Jehovah, and could not be a seeking from the heart (ver. 15), is strongly expressed. Comp. Mic. vi. 8; Is. i. 11–17; Ps. xl. 7, 9; l. 8 ff.; li. 18 ff.; 1 Sam. xv. 22.

To infer, however, from this polemic of prophecy against the *opus operatum* of sacrifice (sacrifice to an idol is to the Prophet only slaughter), that it values sacrifice in itself but little, and stands as to the Law, etc., upon a freer standpoint, is assuredly wrong. If the prophets were the stern guardians of the Law, and especially of the worship of Jehovah, and directed their rebukes against every depreciation of the law and every apostasy from Jehovah, and if they also placed the ceremonial element in worship in contrast to the ethical and internal, they did so because the latter was absent, and because it alone gave to sacrifice its real worth. And in our passage it is not to be overlooked that Hosea turns first to the sacrifices of the ten tribes, to the places of unlawful sacrifice, and denounces them as worthless, not merely on account of the absence of the inner qualities, but because he saw the people engaged in a course of conduct illegal and therefore displeasing to God; rejects their sacrifices and therefore so much the more opposes to these the inner qualities, and amongst these, the knowledge of God, which would lead back to God and thereby also to the legal worship of Jehovah with *its* sacrifices. On the relation of the sacrificial service to the future time of salvation, see on chap. xiv.

5. Chap. vi. 7. "They have, like Adam, broken the covenant." The passage is important as being the only, but a clear, reference to the Fall in the Old Testament. This is presented as a transgression of the Covenant, and God is therefore conceived of as standing to the first man in a covenant-relation. Adam's sin appears, therefore, to the Prophet, not as something trifling, but as a great transgression, just as Paul speaks of it in the Epistle to the Romans, though there is nothing said of the consequences of this sin upon mankind. And while this transgression is thought of as a (the first) violation of the covenant, there is also ascribed to it a significance as influencing the destiny of the world.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. Würt. Summ.: Preachers should rebuke the sins of rulers as well as those of subjects, so that they bear not the guilt of the souls that are lost, whose blood God will require at their hands.

Ver. 2. Great zeal, even though it be in the cause of religion, is not the chief thing. It is of itself mere bigotry and has no merit, but is rather to be rejected if it is against the truth.

[Matthew Henry: Those that have apostatized from the truths of God are often the most subtle and barbarous persecutors of those that still adhere to them. — M.]

Ver. 4. The longer thou continuest in sin the more difficult is the return. He who commits sin is the servant of sin. At first he will not return, at last he cannot. The heart is hardened. The spirit of whoredom: not single sins that are committed, but an evil spirit rising up and taking possession of the soul. The more men sin against God, the more they lose the knowledge of Him, and the more difficult it is for them to return; and so the chastisement of God must be more severe to bring them back to Him.

Ver. 5. God spares not even his own, when they sin.

Starke: He who mingles with the ungodly will be punished with them.

[Pusey: In the presence of God there is needed no other witness against the sinner than his own conscience. — M.]

Ver. 6. Starke: God will not be slighted with the outward appearance of godliness. In distress men should indeed seek God, though not in hypocrisy, but in sincerity. Our most acceptable sacrifice to God, is the surrender of ourselves, body and soul, to Him.

Ver. 7. Würt. Summ.: Godless parents usually bring up godless children, whom God regards not as his, but as strange children, children of whoredom. They shall suffer a like punishment with their parents. But God will require their blood at the hands of their parents, from whom a heavy reckoning will be demanded. Therefore bring up your children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord, and they will not be strange children, but God's, and heirs of eternal life.

Ver. 9. Starke: In time of war men should not be troubled so much about the cruelty and tyranny of their enemies, as they should lament and bewail their sins.

Ver. 10. Pfaff Bibelwerk: God has set firm bounds even to the great ones of this earth, and prescribed to them laws which they must observe. But when they remove these limits God pours out his wrath upon them like water.

Hengstenberg: If those are cursed who remove a neighbor's landmarks, how much more they who remove those of God!

[Scott: When princes break down the fence of the divine law by their edicts, decisions, or examples, they open the flood-gates of God's wrath: and when subjects willingly obey ungodly and persecuting statutes, they may expect to be given up to grievous exactions and oppressions; for God will disregard the interests, liberty, and security of those who disregard his honor and renounce his service. — M.]

Ver. 12. Luther: There is nothing more delicate than a moth. One can scarcely touch it without killing it, and yet it eats through cloth, and so destroys our clothing. And the wood-worm eats little by little through the hardest wood. So the wrath of God is despised by the ungodly, as though it were without power; yet whatever contends with it must come to destruction, and cannot be restored to its former condition by any might or influence. We are thus warned not to live on in such security, but to fear the Lord and walk in all his ways. All strength and force without this, will not defend us from his wrath.

[Pusey: So God visits the soul with different distresses, bodily or spiritual. He impairs, little by little, health of body or fineness of understanding; or He withdraws grace or spiritual strength, or allows lukewarmness or distaste for the things of God to creep over the soul. These are the gnawings of the moth, overlooked by the sinner, if he persevere in carelessness as to his conscience, yet bringing in the end entire decay of health, of understanding, of heart, of mind, unless God interfere by the mightier mercy of some heavy chastisement, to awaken him. — M.]

Ver. 13. Seek not thy consolation in the world, when the consequences of sin make themselves felt. It helps thee indeed, but only to drag thee completely into its power, and to certain ruin. If men would have the wounds of sin healed, they must hasten to the true Physician, and not to false ones, whose help is of no avail.

[Matthew Henry: Those who neglect God and seek to creatures for help shall certainly be disappointed; that depend upon them for support, will find them not foundations but broken reeds; that depend upon them for supply will find them not fountains but broken cisterns; that depend upon them for comfort and a cure will find them miserable comforters and physicians of no value. — M.]

Ver. 14. Starke: Those who have an angry God, concern themselves to no purpose about resisting their enemies or other misfortunes.

Ver. 15. [Matthew Henry: When men begin to complain more of their sins than of their afflictions, there begin to be some hopes of them. And this is that which God requires of us when we are under his correcting hand, that we own ourselves to be in fault, and to be justly corrected. — M.]

Chap. vi. ver. 1. The language of the repenting sinner. How often does it come so late as this! But O that it would always come! How much must intervene before it comes (much use of the Lord's chastening rod)! but how great also is the gain! Alas that it is so hard for men to decide so! but what a blessed decision it is! — M.]

Ver. 2. God revives us not only that we may live before Him, *i. e.*, to his glory and service, but also live in the enjoyment of his presence and blessing.

Ver. 3. Delay is more disastrous in nothing

than in turning to God. [PUSEY: We know in order to follow: we follow in order to know. Light prepares the way for love. Love opens the mind for new love. The gifts of God are interwoven. They multiply and reproduce each other, until we come to the perfect state of eternity. — M.]

Ver. 4. Transient heats in religion do not accomplish the work which steadfastness must crown.

[MATTHEW HENRY: God never destroys sinners till He sees there is no other way with them. — M.]

Ver. 5. CRAMER: The Law is the ministry which, through the letter, kills. He, therefore, who is not slain and does not die to sin, cannot be made alive through the voice of the Gospel.

[PUSEY: God's past loving-kindness, his pains (so to speak), his solicitations, the drawings of his grace, the tender mercies of his austere chastisements, will, in the day of judgment, stand out as clear as the light, and leave the sinner confounded, without excuse. In this life also God's judgments are as a light which goeth forth, enlightening not the sinner who perishes, but others, in the darkness of ignorance, on whom they burst with a sudden blaze of light.]

Ver. 6. WÜRT. SUMM.: The means by which we become partakers of the mercy of God, are not our works and desert, but the true knowledge of God and faith in Christ which works by love, in which God has more delight and satisfaction than in all outward works. And this is the sum of the whole Christian religion, that we believe in the name of the Son of God and have love toward one another.

Ver. 7. PFAFF. BIBELWERK. Beware of transgressing, by presumptuous sin, the covenant which thou hast made with thy God. He is a great God and not a man, with whom thou hast entered into obligations.

[PUSEY: *There*, He does not say, *where*. But Israel and every sinner in Israel know full well, where. God points out to the conscience of sinners the place and the time, the very spot, where they offended Him. . . . . The sinner's conscience and memory fills up the word *there*. It sees the whole landscape of its sins around. — M.]

Ver. 10. PFAFF. BIBELWERK: Woe to the land, the city, or the church, where God sees nothing but abominations and sins!

Ver. 11. Each one reaps what he has sown. If thou dost become partaker in other men's sins, thou wilt meet with their punishment. If the captivity of God's people is certain, so is also deliverance. But, on the other hand also, the promise presupposes the threatening: no deliverance without judgment upon sin; salvation comes, but only after a long and dark night.

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2. *Chiefly against the Court.*

CHAP. VII. 1–16.

1 When I would heal Israel,
Then the iniquity of Ephraim is made manifest,
And the evil deeds of Samaria.
For they have worked deceit, and the thief enters (the houses).
A band of robbers plunders in the street.
2 And they will not say to their heart,
(That) I have remembered all their wickedness;
Now their deeds have beset them round;
They are before my face.
3 By their wickedness they have pleased the king,
And by their falsehood the princes.
4 All of them (are) adulterers,
(They are) like an oven heated[1] by the baker,
Who rests, stirring up (the fire),
From the kneading of the dough, until it is raised.[1]
5 On the (feast-) day of our king,
The princes begin in the heat[2] of wine
He draws out his hand [goes hand in hand] with scorners.[2]
6 For they draw close together; like the oven is
Their heart in its craftiness;
Their anger[3] sleeps the whole night,
In the morning it burns like a flame of fire.
7 All of them are heated like the oven,
And devour their judges,
All their kings have fallen,
And there is none among them that cries to me.

8 Ephraim mingles with the heathen,
Ephraim has become a cake not turned.

9 Strangers devour his strength,
Yet he does not know it.
Gray hairs are also sprinkled over him,
And he does not know it.
10 And the pride of Israel testifies to his face;
Yet they do not return to Jehovah their God,
And do not seek Him with [in spite of] all this.
11 And Ephraim became a silly dove, without understanding.
To Egypt they called:
To Assyria they went.
12 As they are going
I will spread over them my net;
As a bird of heaven I will bring them down.
I will chastise them,[4] according to the announcement to their congregation.
13 Woe to them that they have wandered from me!
Destruction upon them, that they have sinned against me!
For I would have redeemed them[5]
But they spoke lies against me.
14 They did not cry to me with their heart,
For they shrieked upon their beds;
For corn and new wine they distress themselves;[6]
They apostatized from me.
15 And I instructed (them),
I strengthened their arm;
But they devised evil against me.
16 They will not return upwards[7] [to God],
They have become like a deceitful bow.
Their princes will fall by the sword,
On account of the rage of their tongues:
This[7] (will be) their scorn in the land of Egypt.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL

1 Ver. 4. — בֹּעֵרָה is accentuated as Milel, probably because the Masorites took objection to the fem. form, תַּנּוּר which is elsewhere masculine. But the names for fire and anything connected therewith are in the Semitic languages usually fem. Hence בערה is to be regarded as actually fem., and to be pointed בֹּעֵרָה [See Green, *Heb. Gr.*, § 196 c. — חֻמְצָתוֹ. חָמֵץ takes in the construct inf. the fem. ending, like חֻמְלָה (Ezek. xvi. 5). — M.]

[2 Ver. 5. — חֲמַת is an example of a construct before a noun having a preposition. This may denote the direct and powerful influence of the wine upon the revellers, or it may merely be an example of a poetical usage, Green, § 255, 1. — לֹצְצִים ἁπ. λεγ. Some assume a verb לָצַץ, but Gesenius, Fürst and most regard the form as Piel Part. of לוּץ with מְ dropped. Houbigant would change the reading into לֵצִים, but needlessly. — M.]

[3 Ver. 6. — Henderson objects, to the change of reading to אַפֵּיהֶם, that this never occurs in the sense, *ira*, *furor*, *eorum*. But as anger is a frequent sense of the dual form, and as the exigencies of the case seem to demand another reading, it seems reasonable to adopt the emendation. The conjecture has also the support of antiquity, as the Targum renders רוּגְזְהוֹן and the Syr. ܚܡܬܗܘܢ. Only it is not necessary to retain the י—; the form given in the Exposition is probably the correct reading. — M.]

4 Ver. 12. — אַיְסִירֵם. This form is from the Hiphil הֵיסִיר for הֵסִיר.

5 Ver. 13. — אֶפְדֵּם is a *voluntative* or *optative*: I would or would like to redeem them.

6 Ver. 14. — The LXX. have read יִתְגּוֹדָדוּ: they wound themselves. [But authority vastly preponderates in favor of the received reading. — M.]

[7 Ver. 16 — לֹא עָל. It is agreed that the Kamets is due to the pause and that the normal form is עַל. Critics are divided as to whether this should be regarded as a noun used collectively (they return to no-gods = idols) or as an adverb: upwards = to heaven, where God is. The word means properly an elevation, summit; hence the notion that it might be used concretely = most High. In xi. 7 this certainly seems the true meaning. Again it might be used adverbially, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. The best lexicographers (Gesenius, Fürst) approve the former sense here; some of the best Expositors (Manger, Ewald, Keil, and others) prefer the latter. The Anglo-American expositors, generally, agree with the first named class. Newcome prefers to read לֹא יוֹעִיל: that which cannot profit. — M.] — זוֹ = זֶה, ἁπ. λεγ.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1, 2. **When I would heal Israel,** etc. It was just when God attempted to heal them that their corruption was displayed in its full extent. If it had not been so great the attempt would not have been vain. The latter consisted in the chastisements themselves, but also in the discourses of the Prophet calling them to repentance. Now follows a description of their dreadful condition: lying, theft, and robbery. In the midst of it all, the greatest security, not a single thought of divine punishment. **Their deeds have beset them round.** This expresses evidently the boldness of their sinning = their sins have so increased as to become mountains hedging them round.

Ver. 3. The situation is the more desperate as the corruption extends to the highest ranks.

Ver. 4. **They are all adulterers.** The whole people are such, not merely the king and princes, though these are necessarily included. The adultery in this connection (comp. ver. 2: lying, thieving, and robbery, and ver. 5: debauchery) is to be taken in its literal sense. The comparison of the adulterer to a burning oven is here decisive; which does not suit adultery in the figurative application = idolatry, but expresses well the burning of lust. בֹּעֵרָה מֵאֹפֶה, literally: burning from the baker = heated by the baker. This burning of the oven is further described still more closely and figuratively, and that with relation to the increase of the heat, in the following words: יִשְׁבּוֹת וגו'. Wünsche: Who rests, stirring up, from the kneading of the dough until it is leavened, *i. e.*, when he has kneaded the dough, he rests, namely from kneading, which is the most fatiguing part of the whole process of bread-baking, but then does something else, which compared with the other is resting, namely, heats the stove and stirs it up from the time the dough is kneaded until it is raised. During this time while the process of fermentation is going on, the stove is being heated so as to become quite hot, *i. e.*, hot enough for baking. The Part. therefore is not used for the Inf. depending on ישבות = who ceases to stir up. It would be strange if emphasis were to be laid upon ceasing, leaving off, when the object is to show that the heat increases. And Wünsche remarks rightly that it would be out of place to heat the oven before the dough was kneaded, and then to cease heating it, but that the contrary process is the one followed. [Henderson takes מעיר in the sense of heating, as also does Gesenius. His application is as follows: "To place the violent and incontinent character of their lust in the strongest light, the Prophet compares it to a baker's oven which he raises to such a degree of heat that he only requires to omit feeding it during the short period of the fermentation of the bread. Such was the libidinous character of the Israelites that their impure indulgences were subject to but slight interruptions." But it is evident that the Prophet did not intend to call attention to any interruption of indulgence (and if he had the mode of conveying that notion would not have been very natural), but to emphasize its constant commission. Horsley takes מעיר in the sense of stoker, one who attends to the fire, and makes it the subject of ישבות: "the stoker desists after the kneading of the dough until the fermentation be complete." He then gives a most fanciful application to the act of indulgence. For a sufficient explanation of the images see the Doctrinal and Ethical section, No. 1.—M.]

Ver. 5. But they are not only adulterers; they are also drunkards. They are heated with wine as well as with lust. The rulers here lead the way by their example. **In the day of our king** = festal day, probably birth-day. A banquet is referred to, given by the king to his nobles. By the phrase, our king, Hosea indicates his citizenship in the kingdom of Israel.

הֶחֱלוּ: the LXX., Syr., Chald., and Jerome: they began. Others: they are diseased. But the Hiphil does not mean: to be sick—מָשַׁךְ וג'. The king is the subject; literally: **draws out** [stretches out] his hand with. This means: he holds out his hand constantly to them = keeps company, goes hand in hand with them. **Scorners,** men who throw ridicule upon what is sacred, and is regarded as sacred. Such derision is specially natural in a state of intoxication. Hence the connection in which it stands here with the drinking-bout, a connection which is certainly not fortuitous.

Ver. 6. The figure of the heated oven is again taken up. But it becomes here an image of the heat of anger which burns in their hearts, which, being craftily concealed, does not at first make itself manifest, but which grows only the more surely, and at last breaks out in deeds of violence. (Just so is it in ver. 4 with the heat of the bake-oven.) The notion is evidently this, that the cordiality of the princes towards the king in the banquet is only apparent, only the result of cunning. It ends with an insurrection, with the murder of the king, who has certainly richly deserved such a lot.—קֵרְבוּ וג'. This is a difficult expression. Some: they have made their heart approach (resemble) an oven. But this is languid. Would any one say, in giving an illustration, that the object was only "approximately" like the image? Besides, כַּ with תַּנּוּר would be superfluous. Keil: they have brought their heart into their craftiness as into an oven. The cunning is compared with the oven; the heart with the fuel. This clearly gives a plain sense. It would be perhaps more correct to detach קרבו from what follows as forming a clause by itself. Simson: they (the conspirators) approach. Wünsche, perhaps better: they draw close together, namely, in the banquet, at all events, as conspirators. The following words then mean simply: like an oven is their heart in their malice. Thus the malicious heart is like an oven which only waits for the kindling of a fire.—כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה וג'; according to the Masoretic punctuation: the whole night sleeps their baker. Baker would then = he who heats the oven, *i. e.*, their heart inflames them. By the baker might be understood passion (Ewald, Keil). This would rather be compared to the fire. "The baker sleeps" would then be explained as meaning that the baker after kindling the fire, cared no more about it. But it would not be exactly suitable to conceive of "passion" as sleeping, that is, not stirring up the fire. Simson refers "baker" to a person, the leader of the conspiracy. But the following member of the verse creates most difficulty. הוּא introduces another subject, the oven. It is therefore naturally suggested (Wünsche) to change the pointing into אַפְּהֶם, = their anger. This is

represented as fire, and this sleeps in the night, *i. e.*, it burns on, unperceived, during the whole night, until in the morning it becomes a clearly burning flame. So with their anger. "Night" and "morning" allude primarily to the figure of the fire, but probably also to the thing represented itself, especially if it be supposed that at the end of the feast, which has lasted the whole night, the anger breaks forth in the morning in violent acts, which are more particularly described in

Ver. 7. **All of them**, probably not merely the princes, but the whole people, together with the princes, who gave the impulse to the rest. **They devour their judges**, *i. e.*, the kings. The following clause: **all their kings fall**, does not add anything new, but only expresses what is meant by the judges. This applies to the period succeeding that of Jeroboam II., when in swift succession Zachariah was overthrown by Shallum, Shallum by Menahem, and Menahem's son Pekahiah by Pekah, and between Zachariah and Shallum eleven years' anarchy prevailed. The Prophet alludes here to such events, certainly to a number of such events (perhaps also to earlier revolutions in the succession), as the plural, judges, kings, plainly shows. Yet the particular description in vers. 5, 6, suggest the conjecture that the Prophet had in mind a special case, and then in ver. 7 gives a general view. **And there is none amongst them who calls upon me.** The reference probably is to the kings. The sentence thus indicates briefly but strikingly the complete estrangement from God, the deplorable situation of these kings. Keil supposes the whole nation to be referred to: no one is brought to reflection in the midst of these mournful circumstances, that he should return to the Lord.

Ver. 8. **Ephraim mingles itself up with the nations.** This refers certainly not to the invasion of the Israelitish possessions by the heathen, nor merely to alliances with them (ver. 11), but in addition to something more profound, it supposes that through idolatry heathen practices were followed. Comp. Ps. cv. 35, 36, 39, "which passage furnishes a commentary upon ours" (Wünsche). **A cake not turned**, and therefore burnt on one side (while it is not baked at all on the other). The idea is plain. [On the preceding sentence, Henderson: "In Ps. cv. 35 a similar expression is used of promiscuous intercourse with idolaters. That such intercourse generally, and not specifically the entering into leagues with them, is meant, appears from the following clause, in which, to express the worthlessness of the Ephraimitish character, the people are compared to a cake, which, from not having been turned, is burnt and good for nothing. . . . Such was the state of the apostate Israelites; they had corrupted themselves and were fit only for rejection." — M.]

Ver. 9. Their being burnt declared figuratively that **strangers devoured their strength.** This is not merely an outward devastation by war, but an inner consumption by the inroads of heathen practices. Indications of old age also are apparent in Israel as tokens of speedy decay.

Ver. 10. See chap. v. 5.

Ver. 11. A consequence of impenitence. Israel is like a simple dove, which, not observing the snare set for her, is caught in it (ver. 12). **They called out to Egypt; they went to Assyria.** Assyria threatened Israel. The latter then turned immediately to Egypt, to obtain help against Assyria, and partly sought to gain the favor of Assyria (chap. viii. 9). And after all they fell into the net of Assyria.

Ver. 12. It is the Lord who inveigles them into destruction. **According to the announcement to their congregation** = according to the oft-repeated threatening against the people (comp. in the Law, Lev. xxvi. 14 ff.; Deut. xxviii. 15 ff.).

Ver. 13. **They spoke lies concerning me**, namely, that I would not help them. And they, in effect, lie when they do not call out for help.

Ver. 14. **And they did not cry out to me with their heart**, even if they did cry with the mouth. Their cry was one of unbelieving despair. יִתְגּוֹרָרוּ, according to Fürst, to distress themselves, parallel to יְיֵלִילוּ. Others: assemble themselves in crowds, *i. e.*, with eager desire for corn and wine. [See Grammatical Note.]

Ver. 15. **They devise evil against me**, namely, in their apostasy.

Ver. 16. עָל, probably adverb = upwards. [See Grammatical Note.]

A deceitful bow: a bow upon which the archer cannot depend, which, when he is in the act of shooting, he fears may cause him to miss his aim. So God cannot depend upon Israel, is deceived in them every moment, cannot reach the aim with them which He desires. Others claim for רְמִיָּה the meaning: slackness, therefore, a slack bow, which cannot carry the arrow to the mark. Each meaning affords essentially the same result. The princes are emphasized, because they were the seducers of the people. This (will become) a scorning in the land of Egypt; that is: the scorn of Egypt will fall upon them for this reason, namely, on account of the falling of the princes just mentioned. Not = because they placed their trust in Egypt and fell notwithstanding (Keil), for this would rather earn them the scorn of Assyria. They would be ridiculed by Egypt because of the weakness revealed in their fall, while they had magnified their strength before Egypt.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The Prophet assails the practices of the court without ceremony, and brands them with some powerful strokes, as a course of life, in which the nobles are as ready to carouse together as to conspire against one another. All discipline, as well as all fidelity, is wanting. "Even when they hold a feast in honor of their king, there is no end to their gorging, lewdness, carousing, etc. The more vilely they behave, the better they suppose they shall celebrate the day of the king. On the other hand, when they are dissatisfied with their king they are as eager and anxious to murder him, as they formerly were to drink his health until they became intoxicated." The spirit which governs these circles is aptly compared to a fire, for it is a powerful passion by which they are driven about, revealed in various forms, partly in the form of sensual and fleshly lust, and partly in the form of craft, rage, and party-intrigue. With the loss of morality, frivolity goes hand in hand, partly as consequence and partly as cause. The courtiers together with the king are "scorners," or make common cause with them. "The scorner, לֵץ, is the presumptuous, haughty, puffed-up (enlightened) man, who sets himself above what is and is regarded as sacred, and so practices his scornful amusement." Comp. also vers. 16: the insolence of the tongue.

2. The decay of the kingdom is already patent. Ver. 9: Gray hairs show themselves. But where the mistake lies, namely, in apostasy from Jehovah, those of the upper circles will not regard it (for it is these that the Prophet has specially in mind, comp. also ver. 16). Therefore, instead of returning to Him and seeking Him (ver. 10), the opposite means are seized upon, which have a result just the opposite of what they desire: help is sought in the world-powers (ver. 11). Not merely the vanity but the disastrous nature of such dealing is now clearly expressed; for Israel is just preparing the way for its own ruin. It is like a silly dove, which does not see the net, and so straightway falls into it, *i. e.*, the world-powers are preparing its destruction. In truth, however, it is God who employs them to punish his faithless people (ver. 12). And thus will be fulfilled the previous announcement of punishment by the prophets (according to the declaration to their congregation, ver. 12). It is not yet particularly indicated how the world-powers are to accomplish their destruction, nothing being as yet said of a captivity.

3. We may collect the other scattered strokes delineating Israel's conduct towards God (for in such brief touches are the moral and religious views of our book exhibited). — Ver. 2 describes the insensibility of the conscience, which in the commission of evil deeds ignores God's omniscience, while nothing is more certain than that God knows them — they are before his face.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Pfaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 1. When God lays his hand upon the conscience and his Spirit chastens it, then is first truly felt the greatness of sin. O, that we would subject ourselves to such chastening of the Spirit, and we would be saved!

Cramer: When a sinner is about to receive help, it is with him as with many patients. They often do not feel their disease and danger, until the physician comes and reveals them.

Pfaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 2. It is great simplicity on the part of the ungodly to suppose that God does not know their wickedness. Mark, soul, the eyes of the Lord are like flames of fire, and know even the most secret things of thy heart, and accompany thee in all thy evil ways.

[Matt. Henry: This is the sinner's atheism. As good say there is no God, as say He is either ignorant or forgetful; none that judgeth in the earth, as say He remembers not the things He is to give judgment upon. — M.]

Pfaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 4. Ye lustful men who burn so in your lascivious desires, know that a fire is prepared for you in the other world where you will burn forever.

Pfaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 7. What a deplorable situation men are in, when they have no longer confidence to cry out to God for help in their distress, because conscience tells them that they have made Him their enemy. But it is a great consolation to the pious that, when there is none to take their part, they have free access to God and his help.

Ver. 8. Beware of heathenish desires and practices. As soon as thou dost admit them — and they may obtain entrance in all kinds of seemingly harmless shapes, even in a refined form — they injure thy religious nature. The result is a stupefying of the spiritual sense, the loss of spiritual taste, then only remains an "unturned, insipid, and disgusting cake."

[Pusey: Ver. 9. "Thy gray hairs are thy passing-bell," says the proverb. — M.]

Pfaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 10. Man, thy sins condemn thyself. What! wouldst thou exculpate thyself? Turn only to thy conscience and ask it; it will soon utter thy condemnation.

[Pusey: Ver. 13. To be separated from God is the source of all evils. Whoever seeks anything out of God or against his will, whoever seeks from man or from idols, from fortune or from his own powers, what God alone bestows; whoever acts as if God were not a good God ready to receive the penitent, or a just God who will avenge the holiness of his laws and not clear the guilty, does in fact speak lies against God. — M.]

Ver. 14. Is it the worst with thee when prosperity is past? To be vexed at the loss of temporal blessings, is a mourning of this world, and does not lead to life.

Matt. Henry: To pray is to lift up the soul unto God; this is the essence of prayer. If that be not done, words, though never so well worded, are but wind; but if there be that, it is an acceptable prayer though the groanings cannot be uttered. — M.]

[Pusey: Ver. 15. The creature can neither hurt nor profit the Creator. But since God vouchsafed to be their King, He designed to look upon their rebellions as so many efforts to injure Him. — M.]

Ver. 16. Whither dost thou turn? Upwards or downwards?

[Pusey: *Like a deceitful bow.* In like way doth every sinner act, using against God in the service of Satan, God's gifts of nature or of outward means, talents or wealth, or strength, or beauty, or power of speech, — God gave all for his own glory; and man turns all aside to do honor and service to Satan. — M.]

II. THE JUDGMENT.

A. "*Sowing the Wind brings forth the Whirlwind as a Harvest.*" *Galling Dependence upon Assyria.*

Chapter VIII. 1-14.

1 To thy mouth (set) the trumpet:
"Like the eagle (it is coming) upon the house of Jehovah,"
Because they broke my Covenant,
And sinned against my Law.
2 To me they will cry:
"My God,[1] we know Thee, (we) Israel.
3 Yet Israel has rejected the good;
Let the enemy pursue him![2]
4 They set up kings, but not by me,
Made princes, but I knew (them) not.
Their silver and their gold
They made into idols for themselves,
That it [silver and gold] might be destroyed.
5 He has rejected thy calf, Samaria,
My anger is inflamed against them,
How long shall ye be incapable of purity?
6 For that also [the calf] is from Israel,
The maker has formed it,
And it is no God,
For the calf of Samaria will become fragments.[3]
7 For they sowed wind and will reap a whirlwind,
It has no stalk,
(But) a sprout which will yield no meal;
If it should yield (any),
Strangers would devour it.
8 Israel is swallowed up,
Even now have they become among the nations,
Like a vessel, in which no pleasure is taken.
9 For they have gone up to Assyria;
(As) a wild-ass going alone by herself,
Ephraim gave presents[4] (for) love.
10 Even if they give presents[4] among the nations,
I will now gather [carry] them together (thither),
And in a little they will have sorrow for the tribute of the king of the princes.[5]
11 For Israel has increased altars for sinning,
They became to him altars for sinning.
12 I presented to him a myriad[6] (precepts) of my Law,
(Yet) they are regarded as something strange.
13 My sacrificial offerings they sacrifice as flesh and eat (them):
Jehovah has no pleasure in them,
He will now remember their guilt,
And will punish their princes;
They will return to Egypt!
14 For Israel forgot his Creator
And built (idol-) temples,
And Judah increased the fortified cities:[7]
But I will send fire into his cities,
And it shall devour her palaces.[7]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 2.— אֱלֹהַי: my God. A distributive use of the singular pronoun. Each of the Israelites is represented as uttering the exclamation, and then all combined as making the protestation in common. Israel is in apposition to the subject of יְדַעֲנוּךָ.—M.]

[2 Ver. 3.—The rendering of Schmoller follows the reading יִרְדְּפוֹ which has nearly as much authority ("forty-seven of De Rossi's MSS., and two more by correction, eight of the most ancient and sixty-two other editions, the Syr., Vulg., and Targ.") as יִרְדְּפֹהוּ in the Textus Receptus, and is probably correct.—M.]

[3 Ver. 6.— שְׁבָבִים, ἅπ. λεγ. Its root does not exist in Heb. It is usually compared with Chald. שְׁבַב to break in pieces. Henderson prefers to consider it = שְׁבִיבִים flames. Arab. شَبَّ, to kindle a fire.—M.]

4 Vers. 9, 10.— הִתְנוּ — יִתְּנוּ. The Hiphil and the Kal have here the same meaning: to give presents.

5 Ver. 10.—Simson and others translate: king and princes, namely, those of Israel, referring to the tribute which they pay. Here an asyndeton is assumed, or וְשָׂרִים is read, after the ancient versions and several codices.

6 Ver. 12.— רבו. According to the Kethibh = רִבּוֹ with ת rejected = 10000, a myriad. The Masorites, probably because they thought the expression too strong, would make the reading רֻבֵּי, multitudes, from רֹב, which however does not elsewhere occur in the plural.

7 Ver. 14.— בְּעָרָיו, אַרְמְנֹתֶיהָ. Both of these refer merely to Judah. In the former the people are thought of and therefore the masc. suffix is employed; in the latter the country, and therefore the fem. [It is possible, also, that the latter refers to each of the cities regarded individually.—M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **(Set) the trumpet to thy mouth.** Jehovah commands the Prophet, as the herald of God, to proclaim with the trumpet of Israel the impending judgment: "**Like an eagle** (it is coming) **upon the house of Jehovah.**" The judgment will fall as swiftly as an eagle (comp. Deut. xxviii. 49). The house of Jehovah not = the Temple, but Israel, as the people among whom God dwells (should and would dwell), comp. ix. 8–15; Num. xii. 7; Jer. xii. 7; Zech. ix. 8.

Ver. 2. **Every one will cry: "My God!" Israel** is in apposition to the subject contained in the verb [we know thee, we, Israel]. They rely upon the knowledge of God, which, as his people, they assuredly have. But it is a dead knowledge which can bring no deliverance.—Vers. 3 and 4 show the position of Israel.

Ver. 4. **They have set up kings, but not by me.** This refers to the self-authorized schism from the royal house of David. *All* the kings of Israel were not from God (that the government of the Ten Tribes was announced beforehand to Jeroboam by Ahijah the Prophet, 1 Kings xi. 30 ff., and that Jehu was anointed king and commissioned by Elisha, do not contradict this, for God makes use even of human sins to execute his decrees); and besides, according to chap. vii. 7, the Prophet probably has in view the frequent violent dethronements and usurpations individually.— לְמַעַן יִכָּרֵת: in order that it, namely, the silver and gold, may be destroyed (comp. ver. 6). לְמַעַן expresses the certainty of the result as if it had been designed. [Most have regarded Israel (collectively) as the subject of this verb, but, as Keil says, the same thing is more fully stated in ver. 6, and the connection of the clause is clear.—M.]

Ver. 5. **He has rejected thy calf, Samaria.** Samaria is mentioned as the capital instead of the whole kingdom. The Calf in Bethel is meant. [Henderson, with many Continental Translators, renders: thy calf is an abomination, the verb being taken intransitively. This is better than the translation of E. V., which is retained by Pusey in its natural sense, and by Horsley with a most astonishing application of the expression: "Here God himself turns short upon Samaria or the Ten Tribes, and upbraids their corrupt worship by taking to Himself the title of Samaria's calf. I whom you have so dishonored by setting up that contemptible idol as the symbol of my glory—now expressly disown you." The parallelism, as well as the whole drift of the passage seems to confirm the view adopted above.—M.] **How long will they be incapable of purity?** incapable of walking purely before the Lord instead of polluting themselves with idols.

Ver. 6. וְהוּא is the predicate; this also = the Calf. It originated from men—from Israel through the maker—and is therefore no God.

Ver. 7. This result is the natural harvest of the evil sowing. The same image occurs in xii. 2. רוּחַ is an image of vain human efforts, from which ruin is developed, as naturally as the wind becomes a tempest. Chap. x. 13; Job iv. 8; Prov. xxii. 8 are analogous, where אָוֶן, עָמָל, and עולה are the seed. The sowing of the wind is first regarded as one which brings a harvest of disaster and ruin, but afterwards, as one which, like the wind (image of nothingness, from which nothing can come), deceives the sower, brings him in no harvest צֶמַח־קֶמַח: a word-play. The latter is literally meal, flour: perhaps = ears, as bearing the grains from which the flour is made. The following sentence declares that all their prospects were blasted. Israel's efforts in every direction are fruitless. The judgment through Assyria stands in the back ground already.

Ver. 8 is connected with ver. 7, but advances through the pret. נִבְלַע. Israel is now—already—actually swallowed up. The sequel shows how far and by what means. **Like a vessel, etc.:** comp. Jer. xxii. 28; xlviii. 38.

Ver. 9. פֶּרֶא בּוֹדֵד לוֹ. Keil gives the meaning thus: While a wild ass, a silly animal, remains

alone by itself, in order to maintain its independence, Ephraim seeks to make alliances with the nations of the world, that are unnatural and incompatible with its position. Yet such a comparison by antithesis is somewhat forced. It is much more natural to consider as the *tertium comp.* the burning lust of the wild ass, and to attach the sentence to the following, in which Ephraim is described as a paramour. Wünsche finds the *tert. comp.* in the stubborn and intractable nature of the wild ass: that Israel made a like exhibition in going to Assyria in spite of all prophetic admonition. [So Henderson and, to a certain extent, Pococke, Horsley, Newcome, and Pusey. There is no reason why the two ideas should not be united. — M.] The meaning of the following member is clearly the same as in our phrase: courting one's friendship or love, and with this object giving him presents, flattering him, etc. So did Ephraim court the friendship of Assyria; but the expression is peculiarly pregnant. They presented love = they gave presents in order thereby to obtain love = they gave gifts for love.

Ver. 10. But this is all in vain. אֲקַבְּצֵם: I will bring them together, namely, among the nations, *i. e.*, will carry them together thither.—The following words again are very difficult. According to the Masoretic punctation: וַיָּחֵלּוּ, they began. Therefore R. Tanchum, and, among the moderns, Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Keil: They began to become small from the burden of the king of the princes. Others, after the LXX. (Symm., Theodot., Syr., Vulg.), deduce the word from חול, and take it = to cease from, rest: they will rest a little from the burden of the king and princes: to be understood ironically = they will in captivity be deprived of their kings, and will have therefore to pay tribute to them no longer. Ewald and Meier read וְיָחֵלּוּ, also from חול: to wait, abstain from anything = that they may cease a little from paying this shameful tribute, *i. e.*, that they should wait a little before paying it. But was it Jehovah's purpose only to relieve Israel a short time from this tribute? Simson would therefore explain: In a little sorrow will seize them from the tribute of the king and the princes = in a little they will reap in sorrow the fruits of the tribute which they intend to pay as their security, and which makes them a prey to Assyria. So also Wünsche. [It will be noticed that E. V. takes the same view of the verb, but translates: they shall sorrow a little for the burden. Henderson agrees exactly: they shall suffer in a little (so the marginal reading in E. V.) by reason of the tribute. So also Cowles. Pusey thinks the meaning to be, that they shall sorrow but a little now on account of their burdens, in comparison with the greater trials of the captivity. — M.] The various views taken of מֶלֶךְ שָׂרִים are already apparent. It is usually and probably correctly understood of the Assyrian king, in the sense: king of kings. [The native Assyrian word for prince, as lately made out from the inscriptions, is *sarru*, answering to the Hebrew *sar*, and Professor Green (*Pres. Quarterly*, July, 1872, p. 128) is inclined to suspect that it explains this expression: king of princes, "which would seem not to be an arbitrary or merely poetic variation of the lordly title, 'king of kings,' but to contain a designed allusion to the native Assyrian word. And a like allusion may be found in the words attributed to Sennacherib (Is. x. 8): 'Are not my princes altogether kings?'" — M.] Therefore (regarding מַשָּׂא as = tribute) tribute to the king, or tribute which he imposes. [See Textual note.]

Ver. 11. **Increased the altars**, while Israel should have only one altar.

Ver. 12. **Myriads of my Law**, hyperbole, to express the almost innumerable individual commands of the Law. [See Textual note.]

Ver. 13. הַבְהָבַי, according to Fürst from a root הוּב, to roast, formed by reduplication: a sacrifice burnt upon the altar, a holocaust. It is incomplete unless joined with זֶבַח, literally, a sacrifice of what is burnt, a burnt-offering. **My burnt-offerings**, *i. e.*, those which should be burnt for Me, they slaughter for meat and devour. Therefore a complete profanation of the sacrifices. They were concerned only about the flesh. [The usual derivation from יהב, to give, with the meaning: offerings, gives substantially the same sense: sacrificial offerings, and is, at least, as probable as the other. — M.] **They return to Egypt**. Egypt is a type of the land of bondage (comp. Deut. xxviii. 68). Actual captivity in Egypt is scarcely meant.

Ver. 14. **Israel forgot his Creator**. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 15. **Temples**, perhaps idol-temples. Keil: palaces. The assertion would then be similar to that concerning Judah. But the notion is that Israel builds idol-temples, while Judah does not do that, but by increasing its fortified cities upon which it relied, it showed no less that it was forgetting God. **Cities, Palaces**, therefore refer to Judah alone.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. In spite of all departure from God, the sinner will often not quite abandon religion, worship, and prayer. In his hypocrisy he often misuses the most beautiful words (ver. 2): "Thou art my God," is otherwise the sum of all precious prayer. Hypocrites compile from the Scriptures a little book of compliments when they find some formulas which are extolled there. They place themselves behind these, while they are far from feeling their power (Rieger).

2. To practice idolatry, in the grosser or in the more refined sense, is to sow the wind, and the whirlwind follows sooner or later, as the harvest. When men forsake the living God, they build upon themselves, upon their own power and wisdom, and the more self-inflated they become, the more certain is their violent fall. All the more so that the foundations of a moral life have been undermined by forgetting the living God; more place is gradually given to vanity, thirst for pleasure, and evil desires, even against their own inclination. They are given up by the God to whom they would not give the glory. There must come a dreadful harvest of whirlwinds, though it may tarry long, though the results of the sowing may deceive and corrupt him long with their glitter and eclat. How often has this been proved in the history of individuals and nations! Compare the fate of the Second French Empire.

3. "God prescribed to Israel myriads of commands." How strongly this expresses the care of God of his people, and the comprehensiveness of his revelation! Truly nothing is wanting to them;

in no way can they complain that they have been meagrely supplied. All the greater is their guilt, in regarding these commands as something "strange," as though they did not concern them at all, while they were issued solely for that people, and designed for their good. On the other side, the expression, "myriads of my Law," is certainly most significant as regards the Old Testament stand-point. All these myriads were then received, but the Gospel was not yet given. The *one* gospel, the *one* message: the Word became Flesh, outweighs them all. The mercy of God in Christ assured by that message has a force quite different from all law. This mercy of the Gospel is also regarded as something strange, though men should regard it as most truly their own, *i. e.*, as answering their most intimate and their inmost needs, which can be said of no law.

4. "They shall return to Egypt." See on ch. ix.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 2, 3. How ready men are in time of affliction to depend upon their acquaintance with God and their service of Him, and upon their religious life, and to found on these a claim for help, and yet at other times they inquire after God so little! In affliction we hear nothing else than: my God.

WÜRT. SUMM.: The cause of war and all its resulting evils, is, that men reject "the good." And the good is God and his Word, with faith and obedience.

[POCOCKE: God is simply, supremely, wholly, universally good, and good to all, the Author and Fountain of all good, so that there is nothing simply good but God; nothing worthy of that title except in respect of its relation to Him who is good and doing good. Ps. cxix. 68. — M.]

Vers. 5, 6. Idolatry is man's foulest pollution.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Deifying any creature makes way for the destruction of it. — M.]

Ver. 8. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* Sin has this bitter fruit also, that those who serve it come to be despised even by the world.

Vers. 9, 10. Trust in men or in earthly things more than in God is by Him counted idolatry. Trust in men must be most sorely repented of: for not only is the desired help most frequently not found, but those who trust in them are outwardly or inwardly still dependent upon them, and will be heavily oppressed.

Ver. 11. It does not help to increase altars. It depends on the one to whom the sacrifice is made.

Ver. 12. How richly has God remembered us with direction! What a rich treasure of the most varied instruction we have in his Word! But what will it profit us if we regard it as something "strange," when God in it addresses Himself directly to us? — The *one* Gospel is assuredly a greater gift of God than the myriads of the Law.

Ver. 13. God is as strict a creditor toward impenitent sinners as He is a kind and indulgent one towards the penitent.

[MATT. HENRY: A petition for leave to sin amounts to an imprecation of the curse for sin, and so it shall be answered.

PUSEY: God seems to man to forget his sins, when He forbears to punish them; to remember them when He punishes. — M.]

Ver. 14. Incomprehensible that man should forget his Maker! but it is only too frequent. To have been created by God, and yet to build temples to idols; what a plain contradiction!

B. *The carrying away into Assyria. Decrease of the People.*

CHAPTER IX. 1–17.

1 Rejoice not,[1] Israel,
Unto exultation, like the heathen,
For thou hast committed whoredom, departing from thy God,
Thou hast loved the reward of whoredom,
On all corn-floors.
2 The threshing-floor and the (oil-) press will not nourish them,[2]
And the new wine will deceive them.
3 They will not remain in the land of Jehovah,
But Ephraim will return to Egypt,
And in Assyria he will eat (things) unclean.
4 They will not pour out wine for Jehovah,
For their offerings will not please Him;
Like bread of mourning (their food will be) to them,
All who eat it will defile themselves:
For their bread is only for themselves,
It does not come into the house of Jehovah.
5 What will ye do on the day of the assembly,
And on the day of the feast of Jehovah?

6 For, behold, they have gone away because of the desolation:
Egypt will gather them,
Memphis will bury them.
Their precious[3] things of silver,
Thistles will inherit them;
Thorns (will be) in their tents.
7 The days of punishment have come,
The days of retribution,
Israel will discover:
The prophet is foolish,
The man of the spirit is crazed —
Because of the greatness of thy guilt,
And because the enmity is so great.[4]
8 Ephraim is a searcher (after revelations) with my God:
(As to) the Prophet, the snare of the fowler
Is upon all his paths:
There is enmity in the house of his God.

9 They have wrought deep corruption[5] as in the days of Gibeah,
He will remember their guilt,
He will visit (upon them) their sins.
10 I found Israel as grapes in the desert,
Like the early fruit on the fig tree in its first (bearing) I found your fathers,
Yet they went after Baal-Peor,
And consecrated themselves to shame,
And became an abomination, like their paramour.
11 Ephraim — his glory will fly away as a bird;
No bearing, no pregnancy, no conception.
12 Even if they rear up their sons,
I will bereave them of men,
For, indeed, woe is to them,
When I depart from them!
13 Ephraim, like as I saw Tyre,
(Is) planted by the sea,
Yet must Ephraim lead out his sons to the murderer.
14 Give to them, O Lord: — what wilt Thou give?
Give a barren womb and dry breasts.
15 All their evil is in Gilgal —
For there have I hated them;
For the evil of their deeds
Will I drive them out of my house,
Will not love them any more;
All their princes are apostates.
16 Ephraim is smitten,
Their root is withered,
They will not bear fruit;
And even if they should bear,
I will slay the darlings of their womb.
17 My God will abhor them,
Because they did not hear Him,
And they will be fugitives among the nations.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1. — The ancient Translators appear to have read אַל־גִּיל. [This is false grammatically, as אַל is always followed by the future. — M.]

[2] Ver. 2. — בָּהּ. The people are here regarded as a woman. [Tanchum gives the rule that "in continued discourse when a nation or people is spoken of either the fem. suffix agreeing with עֵדָה: congregation, or the masc. agreeing with עַם: people, may be used, as also that the singular may be used of them viewed as a body, and the plural when

they are regarded as consisting of distinct individuals." So Ewald as to the gender, making the suffix relate to "*die treulose Gemeine.*"—M.]

[3] **Ver. 6.—מַחְמַד is in the construct state with לְ.**

[4] **Ver. 7.—וְרַבָּה. The sentence continues as though a conjunction [because] preceded. The conjunction is implied in עַל.**

[[5] Ver. 9.—For the asyndeton here, see note on chap. v. 2. It is best to take שִׁחֲתוּ intransitively, and not understand an object, *e. g.* דַּרְכֵּיהֶם, which some supply.—M.]

[6] **Ver. 13.—וְאֶפְרַיִם forms the apodosis which introduces a contrast to the protasis. לְהוֹצִיא = must lead forth. See Ewald, 237, c. [The literal rendering is: But Ephraim (is) to lead forth, etc.—M.]**

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1, 2. אֶל־גִּיל intensifies the notion of rejoicing = unto exultation (comp. Job iii. 22). According to what follows it is rejoicing over a bountiful harvest. It was this that Israel expected and for which they would rejoice. But such joy was to be taken from them. כָּעַמִּים. Keil: "Israel, after the heathen fashion, attributed the blessing of harvest to the gods, and rejoices in it as in a gift of the gods, after the manner of the heathen." That this is the meaning is evident from what follows, in which I discover not so much the ground why Israel should not rejoice, as an explanation of the כָּעַמִּים, especially in the second member: thou hast loved. The lover's reward is the reward which the paramour gives to his mistress, or here the idol to its servant, the people. The addition: upon all corn-floors, shows what is regarded as that reward: it is that which is laid upon these floors, the fruits of harvest, which Israel considers to be the gift of the idols, as their reward for serving them (comp. ii. 7-14). **Press**: probably = oil-press, as new wine is specified afterwards; comp. also ii. 10-24; corn, wine, and oil are therefore mentioned together.

Ver. 3 shows how this will be brought about; it is not owing to the failure of the harvest, but to a captivity: thus they will lose their harvest which had grown. **Return to Egypt**, etc.: Keil is here undoubtedly correct when he says: "The expulsion is described as a return to Egypt, as in ch. viii. 13; but Assyria is mentioned immediately afterwards as the real land of banishment. That this threat is not to be understood as implying that they will be carried away to Egypt as well as to Assyria, but that Egypt is referred to here and in ver. 6, just as in viii. 13 simply as a type of the land of captivity, so that Assyria is represented as a new Egypt, may be clearly seen from the very words of our verse, in which the eating of unclean bread in Assyria is mentioned as the immediate consequence of a return to Egypt, whereas neither here nor in ver. 6 is there any allusion to a carrying away to Assyria at all; but, on the contrary, in ver. 6, Egypt only is introduced as the place where they are to find their grave. This becomes still more evident from the fact that Hosea speaks throughout of Assyria as the rod of God's wrath for his apostate people (comp. v. 13; x. 6, 14). Finally, it is clearly stated in xi. 5 that Israel will not return to Egypt, but that Assyria will be their king. By the allusions to Egypt, therefore, the carrying away into Assyria is simply represented as a state of bondage and oppression similar to Israel's residence in Egypt, or merely the threatening of Deut. xxviii. 68, transferred to Ephraim." **They will eat (what is) defiled**: partly because the legal prohibitions with relation to particular kinds of food could be observed only with difficulty in a foreign country, and especially because with the cessation of the sacrificial rites in general, the offering of the first-fruits must cease also, and all food not sanctified by the offering of the first fruits was unclean to Israel. This is completed in ver. 4.

Ver. 4. וְלֹא יֶעֶרְבוּ לוֹ: will not be well pleasing to Him; therefore **their sacrifices** must be taken as the subject in spite of the accents. The meaning is: the sacrifices would not please Him, and therefore none are brought. Israel could not sacrifice to God in exile when He had withdrawn from them his gracious presence. **Like bread of mourning to them** (will be their food). Bread that was partaken of where a dead body lay was considered unclean, because the dead defiled for seven days the house, and all that came in contact with them; therefore: **all who eat it will defile themselves.** Their bread will be לְנַפְשָׁם = for the support of life, and therefore it must be eaten by them, but it does not come into the house of God to be consecrated.

Ver. 5. Festal days are no longer possible. To attempt to distinguish between מוֹעֵד and חַג (the former = the three annual pilgrim feasts, the latter = the other feasts, or, specially, the great harvest-feast, that of Tabernacles), is arbitrary. The expressions are probably synonymous. The notion is only emphasized by the second expression. מוֹעֵד regards the feasts outwardly, as gatherings; חַג rather denoting the rejoicing, or festal character of those occasions.

Ver. 6. **They have gone away**: the prophet sees them in the Spirit as already in banishment. מִשֹּׁד, literally: out of desolation. On Egypt see at ver. 3. [Keil: "Egypt is mentioned as the place of banishment, in the same sense as in ver. 3. There they will all find their graves. מֹף or נֹף, as in Is. xix. 13; Jer. ii. 16; xliv. 1; Ezek. xxx. 13-16, probably contracted from מְנֹף, answers rather to the Coptic *Membe, Memphe*, than to the old Egyptian, Men-nefr, *i. e.*, *mansio bona*, the profane name of the city of Memphis, the ancient capital of Lower Egypt, the ruins of which are to be seen on the west bank of the Nile, to the south of Old Cairo." Memphis was a celebrated burying-place of the Egyptians. The Anglo-American Commentators generally assume a literal allusion to Egypt.—M.] מַחְמַד לְכַסְפָּם = the costliness of their silver [see Gram. note], probably = their houses filled and decked with silver, comp. the parallel אָהֳלֵיהֶם. The growth of thorns and thistles is an image of utter desolation (comp. Is. xxxiv. 13).

Vers. 7, 8. **The Prophet is foolish.** This is in sense dependent upon יָדְעוּ. False prophets are meant, who flattered the people, promising them only good. These will be shown to be fools. Even the false prophet is a man of the spirit, but it is an evil spirit that possesses him (רוּחַ שֶׁקֶר, 1 Kings xxii. 22). **On account of the greatness of thy guilt**, this will happen, namely, that mentioned at the beginning of the verse. מַשְׂטֵמָה, ambush, enmity, namely, against God and his prophets, as is explained in ver. 8. Keil: a searcher is Ephraim with my God. צֹפֶה is used of the "looking out" of the prophet while waiting for a divine revelation. The meaning is: Israel searches out divine revelations along with "my God," *i. e.*, the God of the prophet. He trusts in his own prophets, not in those inspired by Jehovah. Others find in צפה the notion of lying in wait. God would then be the object of the lying in wait of an enemy. He would be so in the person of the prophets, for whom, according to the following hemistich, snares were set (Ewald, Umbreit, Meier). But the prep. עִם would not suit. The notion: lying in wait for God, is also strange. In the second hemistich נָבִיא could be the false prophet. **The snare of the fowler is upon all his paths** would = he brings the people to ruin by all his actions. **A snare is in the house of his God**, would then be = in the house of the god of the false prophet. But it is better to understand the verse of the enmity which the true prophet must everywhere meet = As to the prophet, the snare, etc. "In the house of his God = in the temple.

Ver. 9. הֶעְמִיקוּ שִׁחֵתוּ, literally, they have made deep, they have wrought corruption = they have wrought deep corruption as in the days of Gibeah, when the shameful deed was done (recorded in Judges xix. ff.) to the Levite's concubine, which resulted in the almost complete extermination of the Tribe of Benjamin. Such conduct must be visited with punishment. Comp. viii. 13.

Ver. 10. Israel sinned grievously not only in Gibeah but earlier also, when God yet took such delight in him. His disposition now is shown to be that which he ever had. So much the more deserved is the punishment. **Like grapes**, etc. = As men prize grapes, etc., so did I prize thee. **In the desert** applies both to the grapes and to the finding, since grapes can be found in the desert, only when one is in the desert. An allusion to Deut. xxxii. 10. **In its beginning**, that is, when it begins to bear. Baal-Peor is here local, according to Keil, since אֶל is wanting; therefore: to the place of Baal-Peor; elsewhere: to the house of Baal-Peor. וַיִּנָּזְרוּ, the same word, used designedly, as that employed to express consecration to Jehovah. They became Nazarites to **Baal-Peor, to shame.** The worship of Baal-Peor is alluded to. [See Num. xxv. 1-5.] The worship of Baal was then Israel's crowning offense, and the old Baal-Peor worship is now renewed.

Vers. 11, 12. **They shall increase no longer.** The unchaste worship of Baal may be referred to, whose natural punishment is the decrease of the population.

Ver. 13. **Difficult.** Keil: Ephraim is the object of רָאִיתִי, and precedes on account of the emphasis laid upon it = I have selected Ephraim for a Tyre = I would make it as glorious as Tyre. [Comp. Gen. xxii. 8 for a similar use of רָאָה. —M.] To describe its glory more particularly, we have the addition: **planted in a meadow**, a place favorable to growth. Wünsche: Ephraim is the subject to be connected with "planted" = Ephraim is planted in a meadow. The intervening clause he translates: like as I look upon Tyre; and the meaning is: Ephraim blooms like the lordly Tyre, wherever men may look. But this is clearly unnatural. The meaning would rather be: Ephraim is as when I look upon Tyre, *i. e.*, when I look on Ephraim, it is as when I look on Tyre. Others (Ewald) by changing the reading to לְצוּרָה: in shape, as to form, outward appearance. Others take צוֹר in the sense of the Arabic: a palm = Ephraim, as I beheld (it), is a palm. [The opinion approved above is apparently that entertained by the translators in E. V. It is that approved by most expositors, and is the most obvious sense suggested by the words. —M.]

Ver. 14. According to many expositors, this is an intercession of the prophet: May the Lord not let the mothers bring forth, rather than that the sons should be destined to death. But an intercession would scarcely suit in such a severe announcement of judgment. Therefore others consider it a prayer that other punishment may be inflicted. An important element in the punishment is the unfruitfulness of marriages. The thought of ver. 11 would then be essentially resumed.

Ver. 15. It cannot now be shown how **all their evil was in Gilgal.** Comp. for the rest, ch. iv. 15. [Henderson: "Gilgal, being one of the chief places of idolatrous worship, the wickedness of the nation might be said to be concentrated in it." This is the usual explanation. —M.] **From my house** = out of my congregation (viii. 1).

Ver. 16. The prophet beholds the future as already present (comp. ver. 11); only that here the image of a tree which can no longer put forth its shoots, is first employed. In the last member, however: **and even if they should bear**, no figure is employed.

Ver. 17 completes the whole, by giving the ground of the punishment, and stating that punishment clearly to be banishment among the nations, when the people should be fugitives.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The judgment stands here altogether in the foreground, and the punishment which the people are to expect is that they will be carried away into Assyria. That event is here indicated as "a return to Egypt," not literally, but rather symbolically (ver. 3). The captivity is regarded not so much as an outward fact, but according to its internal aspect, as the direct negation of that which God had done to Israel in leading them out of Egypt. Several features in the Exodus made it of special significance to Israel. One was the great and undeniable mercy of God. Viewing it more closely, it was a merciful liberation of Israel from bondage, from complete subjection to a foreign power. It was thus the condition and the beginning of Israel's existence as an independent nation. But not only so: God thus brought this people under special obligations to Him. As He

had owned them to be his so expressly and emphatically in Egypt, and separated them from Egypt, they became by his leading them forth justly and legitimately his inheritance. And although this specific relation of Israel towards God did not assume its normal form until the giving of the Law, yet the leading of Israel out of Egypt lay at the foundation of their exaltation to become his people. Finally, it was the condition of, and the first step towards, their introduction into that country which God had promised to give to Israel as his people, and had therefore a fundamental significance in their history. Now the Assyrian Captivity is the direct contrast to this, and is therefore represented as a "return to Egypt." It is as signal a display of God's displeasure and wrath as the former was of his mercy. It is the loss of freedom, a reduction to a state of bondage, and a surrender to the power of a foreign enemy. Israel is only free through his God, and remains so only so long as he serves Him; by apostasy from Him, he therefore forfeited that freedom, and therefore at last must lose it, and forego an independent existence. This surrender to the power of the heathen stands further in the strongest contrast to Israel's relation to God as his people. They are thus really dismissed from this position by God, and abandoned by Him as his people (comp. vers. 15, 17). They are in fact made a "Not-My-People." Israel ignored the Law given at Sinai, and Jehovah ignores the deliverance from Egypt; and, lastly, the Assyrian Captivity is the loss of that country in which Israel's position as God's people had its material basis, as the deliverance from Egypt looked towards the possession of that country. Comp. ver. 3. And as the Promised Land was essentially one of divine blessing, the loss of this blessing is naturally referred to with special emphasis. If Israel has, like the heathen, ascribed such a blessing to false gods, it cannot enjoy the land presented to it as God's people, but as it became like the heathen, it shall return again into their countries. With the loss of the "Land of Jehovah," however, is united, as a peculiarly distressing consequence, the loss of the sacrificial service, and of the sanctification in life thereby conditioned. Israel is sent away into the land of impurity. In this the Captivity is like a return to Egypt. Already in this we hear the sigh of the banished after the Holy Land. Those against whom the objurgatory discourse is primarily directed will, it is true, feel least the impossibility of serving God. And yet even they cannot deny their Israelitish character, and least of all in a strange land. That which they now do not wish to do, or to be able to do, will hereafter be the occasion of their bitter sorrow —and thus it ever is.

2. "All nations rejoice over and enjoy a rich harvest (comp. Is. ix. 2), because they see in the bountiful harvest a sign and pledge of the divine favor, demanding gratitude to the Giver. If now the heathen ascribe these gifts to their gods and thank them after their manner, they do this in the ignorance of their hearts, without being specially guilty in so doing, because they live without the light of divine revelation. If, on the contrary, Israel rejoiced in the blessings of harvest like the heathen, and ascribed them to Baal (ii. 7), God could not leave unpunished this denial of his gracious benefits" (Keil). It amounts to the same thing when one generation ascribes such blessings partly to their own labor and partly to "nature," and accordingly its joy is purely "natural," altogether devoid of gratitude to the great Giver, and manifests itself necessarily in all kinds of self-indulgence.

3. When the judgment comes, the falseness of the false prophets becomes manifest. By these are, without doubt, to be understood those who, aping the position of Prophets of Jehovah, came forward as the pretended announcers of the divine will, and as the advisers of the people, especially of the rulers, but in their flattery of the people would pronounce good and justify everything, and therefore predicted prosperity and deliverance (Ezek. xiii. 10), and never uttered a word of earnest rebuke. They were trusted only too well. On the contrary, the true Prophets had to meet everywhere snares and enmity. Men know too late who are their true friends, and who their false.

4. The true prophet must, it is true, enter into God's designs, not merely of mercy, but also of righteous judgment; must announce them, so far as they have been revealed; and he may even desire their fulfillment, in order that a limit may be set to sin, and God's glory be spread. Yet it must be observed that when the prophets invoke judgment, they do not implore the destruction and death of the individual sinner, but only the "political" death, the destruction of a godless kingdom, because it had filled up the measure of its sins and thus became amenable to judgment, concerning which there could be no doubt in the prophet's mind.

5. With respect to Israel's conduct towards God, we are to observe the retrospect of former times (vers. 9, 10, comp. x. 7; xi. 1, 2). The sins of the present are thus shorn of their individuality and shown to form part of a whole complexity of sin. These are only a mode of manifestation, a new phase, of the same spirit, which was before, and had been always, displayed. As with the displays of God's love to Israel, so with the sins of Israel against God. Instead of an atomizing and mechanical view of this subject, we have a dynamic one, which alone is justifiable in the ethical sphere. From this conception of the evil, according to which its several manifestations of a constant fundamental tendency in the minds of a single nation, no great step is needed to reach the assumption of a constant disposition to evil in mankind generally, of hereditary sin, in which the individual with his special offenses only confirms and realizes the sinful disposition of the race.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

WURT. SUMM.: Vers. 1, 2. Sincere Christians should, in the blessings of God, so rejoice in the Lord, as to acknowledge that all good is from Him alone, to whom they must therefore give thanks, and so use them as not abusing them, but employ them to God's glory. Then will God the Lord not cease to do them good.

Ver. 3. STARKE: That is the Lord's land where God is truly worshipped and honored.

Vers. 4, 5. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* When the measure of iniquity is full, God at last takes away the lamp of his Word from its place. Beware, then, you who have the truth, lest darkness fall upon you.

[PUSEY: It is in human nature to neglect to serve God when He wills it, and then to neglect to serve Him when He forbids it. The more solemn the day and the more total man's exclusion, the more manifest God's withdrawal. — M.]

[Ver. 6. MATT. HENRY: Those that think pre-

sumptuously to outrun God's judgments are likely enough to meet their deaths when they had hoped to save their lives. — M.]

Ver. 7. We usually discover too late who are our true friends and who our false.

PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* False prophets are a token of God's wrath burning over a church or nation.

[PUSEY: The man of the world and the Christian judge of the same things by clear contrary rules, use them for quite contrary ends. The slave of pleasure counts him mad who foregoes it; the wealthy trader counts him mad who gives away profusely. In these days profusion for the love of Christ has been counted a ground for depriving a man of his property. One or the other *is* mad, and worldlings must count the Christian mad, or they must own themselves to be so most fearfully (Wisdom v. 3-6). The sinner first neglects God; then, as the will of God is brought before him, he willfully disobeys Him; then, when he finds God's will irreconcilably at variance with his own, or when God chastens him, he hates Him, and hates Him greatly. — M.]

Ver. 8. Let it not offend you, if, for the sake of the truth, you must suffer persecution. "Even so persecuted they the prophets who were before you."

Ver. 12. When God is graciously disposed towards us, He is our Light, our Way, our Life, our Love, our Comfort, our Joy, our Shepherd, our Physician, our Bridegroom, our Father, and our Redeemer. If He departs from us, all this is gone, like as when the sun sets and darkness covers all.

SPUR: When the divine wrath has begun to burn, it rises, so to speak, by degrees. And God commonly proceeds by beginning at what is most external to us, whose loss we would not deeply feel, but ever advances further towards that which is dearer and of more moment, until at last He strikes at our very selves. If God is not gracious towards us, He is angry; He can sustain no intermediate relation.

Ver. 15. God refuses at last to grant to unfaithful children even the privileges of his house. He at the same time disinherits them. When God ceases to love us we are lost. Hence nothing is more necessary than the prayer: Withdraw not thy love from us. Nothing is more precious than the power to say: I am persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Ver. 16. Whole families, even whole nations die out through God's judgments!

C. *Devastation of the Seats of Worship. Destruction of the Kingdom.*

CHAPTER X. 1-15.

1 Israel is a thriving vine [1]
Which sends forth its fruit;
As its fruit abounded,
It multiplied altars;
According to the prosperity of the land,
The better they made their images.
2 Their heart is smooth: now will they make expiation:
He will cut down their altars, he will destroy their images
3 For now they will say:
We have no king,
Because we did not fear God,
And the king — what will he do for us.
4 They speak words,
Swearing [2] falsely and contracting alliances:
And justice grows like the poison-plant
In the furrows of the field.
5 For the calves [3] of Samaria,
The inhabitants of Samaria will tremble,
For its people mourn for it,
And its idol-priests will tremble for it,
For its glory, that it has departed from it.
6 Itself [4] will be carried to Assyria,
As a present to the warlike king:
Shame will take hold upon Ephraim,
And Israel will be ashamed of its counsel.

7 Samaria [5] is destroyed,
Its king is like a chip on the surface of the water.

8 The high places of Aven are devastated,
The sin of Israel,
Thorns and thistles will grow upon its altars,
Then they will say to the mountains: Cover us!
And to the hills: Fall upon us!

9 Since the days of Gibeah, thou hast sinned, Israel!
There they stood:
The war against the sons of iniquity[6] did not reach them in Gibeah,
10 As I please, I will fetter them,[7]
And the nations will gather themselves against them,
When I bind them for their two offenses.
11 For Ephraim is a well-trained heifer,
Which loves[8] to thresh:
But I will pass over her fair neck:
I will yoke Ephraim,
Judah shall plough,
Jacob [Ephraim] shall harrow.
12 Sow for yourselves according to righteousness,
And reap for yourselves in the (like) measure of mercy!
Break for yourselves (new) soil!
For it is time to seek Jehovah,
Until he come and rain righteousness upon you.
13 (Yet) ye have ploughed wickedness,
Ye have reaped iniquity,
Ye have eaten the fruit of lying:
Because thou didst trust in thy way,
In the multitude of thy heroes.
14 And the noise of war[9] has risen among your tribes,[10]
And all thy fortresses are destroyed,
As Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel in the day of battle,
The mother is dashed upon her children.
15 Thus has Bethel[11] done to you,
For the evil of your evil [your great evil],
In the early morning [soon] the king of Israel shall be utterly destroyed.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1.— גֶּפֶן is always fem. except here and in 2 Kings iv. 39. It is masc. here as relating to Israel. לוֹ is not strictly pleonastic here, it having the force of the poss. pronoun.: its fruit.—M.]

2 Ver. 4.—אָלוֹת, though an inf. absol.. is here conformed to כְּרֹת instead of אָלֹה.

3 Ver. 5.—Wünsche: "עֶגְלוֹת. The fem. is surprising, since the calves which were worshipped, really three-year-old steers, appear elsewhere always masc. It cannot be deemed far-fetched to suggest that the fem. is employed somewhat contemptuously and sarcastically."

4 Ver. 6.—אוֹתוֹ with the passive. According to Ewald, § 299 *d*, the active sense pervades the passive throughout in such a case as this; thus יוּבָל here = one leads it. Fürst is of a different opinion. According to him the primary notion of אות is *being*, *essence*, and it therefore serves to emphasize the subject. [The former is the prevailing and preferable view. Comp. Green, *Gr.*, § 271, 4 *a*. The opinion of Fürst seems to have been based upon his theory that there is an affinity between אות (אֵת) and יֵשׁ, and some other words of similar radicals and significations.—M.]

5 Ver. 7.—מַלְכָּהּ, with a fem. suffix, because שֹׁמְרוֹן, as being a city, is fem. On the other hand נִדְמֶה has a masc. form because it stands at the beginning of the sentence. The construction here, according to the Masoretic punctation is either an asyndeton: Samaria and her king, or the latter is explanatory of the former: Samaria, namely, her king (= the whole kingdom). Wünsche adopts the probably preferable view that מלכה begins a new sentence.

[6 Ver. 9.—עַלְוָה transposed from עַוְלָה. One edition (the Brisian) and many MSS. have the common form. This would be the only case of the occurrence of the transposition.—M.]

7 Ver. 10.—וְאֶסֳּרֵם. ו marks the apodosis. The verb is from אָסַר [with daghesh compensative.—M.].

[8 Ver. 11. — אֹהַבְתִּי. The י is paragogic, with the fem. part. אֹהֶבֶת. — M.]

[9 Ver. 14. — וְקָאם. The א is either epenthetic, or it is merely a *mater lectionis*, which is most probable; see Green, *Gr.*, § 11, 1. — M.]

[10 Ver. 14. — A number of MSS. and early editions read בְּעַמְּךָ instead of בְּעַמֶּיךָ. The ancient Versions are claimed as having followed this reading also; but it is more probable that they rendered the plural as sing., the noun being a collective one. — M.]

10 Ver. 15. — Some suppose the בְּ to have been omitted before בֵּית־אֵל, and the latter to be local.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. Comp. Ps. lxxx. 9–12. There is also an allusion to ch. ix. 10, and yet the image is quite differently applied. Israel is represented here not so much as being pleasant in itself and of worth in the sight of Jehovah (and is therefore not compared to fruit), but from the stand-point of its fruitfulness, which, however, was of the wrong kind. Hence even its fruitfulness will be taken away from it (ch. ix. 16). בּוֹקֵק, according to Fürst = blooming (LXX., Syr., Aquila), and thereafter according to Keil: climbing, thriving, after the primary idea of בקק: to pour out, to run itself out, here = climb upwards. [Fürst compares the Arab. *bakka*: to bloom. If this sense is the correct one, this is the only case of the occurrence of this verb. — M.] The meaning: empty, is unsuitable. שִׁוָּה: to place, set = prepares, furnishes fruit for itself.

Ver. 2. **Their heart is smooth.** The expression is elsewhere employed of the tongue, lips, words = deceitful, false, not sincere (devoted to God). The explanation: divided, is false, for the Kal means: to divide, transitive. יַעֲרֹף is properly: to cut off the head by striking the neck. [Henderson: "It is properly a sacrificial term. It is here, with much force, used metonymically, in application to the destruction of the altars on which the animals themselves were offered." For the force of יֶאְשָׁמוּ see on ver. 15. — M.]

Ver. 3. They will then see that they have no king any longer, because they forsake Jehovah, *i. e.*, none appointed by God, and none, therefore, who can help them. עָשָׂה: to do = to profit.

Ver. 4 explains especially the smoothness of the heart of ver. 2. They speak words, mere words, without sincerity. The following infinitives avouch the statement. The covenants are such as want truth; they were concluded (with foreign nations) only for the sake of an expected advantage, not from real friendship. רֹאשׁ, poison, here = poison-plant. מִשְׁפָּט. Most take this = judgment. A force far-reaching and seizing upon everything, is supposed to be described. But the divine judgment cannot be compared to a vile plant outgrowing everything else. Hence we must remain by the meaning: justice. The thought is manifest: If justice prevailed, the land would be like a well-appointed field, but it is now like one that is neglected, and in which therefore poison plants spring up, because justice was prostrated. By a somewhat bold figure justice, when falsely administered, when perverted and abused, is compared to a poisonous plant. It has been changed into it, as it were. Comp. Amos vi. 12. [Henderson adheres to the former explanation; Pusey approves the latter. It is also preferred by Cowles, who illustrates it from Amos v. 7; vi. 12, and supposes that Hosea adapted the image from its use by his predecessor. — M.]

Ver. 5. The punishment can therefore not linger. Already the inhabitants of Samaria tremble for the golden calves. Keil: The plural עֶגְלוֹת stands here as indefinite and general, without our being obliged to infer that several golden calves had been set up in Bethel." A sing. at all events immediately follows. Wünsche: "The Prophet is thinking of all the calves in the northern kingdom which were imitations of the chief golden idol erected at Bethel. By these imitations all Israel had, in a certain manner, become a Beth Aven." **Beth-Aven.** See ch. iv. 15. **Its people, — its priests.** The suffixes refer to the idol-god. What a strong accusation! The people are named the people of the calf-god. יָגִילוּ usually = to rejoice, but here (employed for the sake of the assurance with גִּיל = (גָּלָה, to writhe in anguish, to mourn, parallel to אָבַל. **On its account,** also refers to the calf, and is more nearly explained by the words, **for its glory,** *i. e.*, the glory and the divine *nimbus* which were associated with the calf-worship. This glory will depart from the calf, where it cannot give protection from the enemy, and will itself be carried away.

Ver. 6. **Itself also,** namely, the golden calf. [See Gram. note]. **Its counsel,** namely, that which itself gave to itself, namely, to apply to Assyria. [On the phrase: warlike king, see ch. v. 13. — M.]

Vers. 7, 8. The kingdom of Samaria falls along with its gods. [See Gram. note.] The image of **a chip on the surface of the water** denotes the untraceable disappearance, and probably also the violent destruction = as a chip upon the water is driven on by the stream and so disappears. בָּמוֹת אָוֶן are literally: the heights of evil. But Aven, in allusion to Beth-Aven = Bethel; for its high places were heights of evil, since the image-worship which rose in Bethel = Beth-Aven, was practiced there. **The sin of Israel** is in apposition to the high-places, etc. Those high places were the sin of Israel, because it was by means of them that Israel sinned. **Then they say to the mountains,** etc. This expresses the hopelessness of despair. They would rather be buried by the mountains, than undergo the afflictions of such a time. Applied in Luke xxiii. 30 and Rev. vi. 16.

Ver. 9. **From the days of Gibeah.** These days, referred to already in ch. iv. 9 (see that passage), are regarded as the beginning of Israel's sinning. Others take the words comparatively: more than in the days of Gibeah. [So Cowles: This opinion is not common. — M.] The following words are difficult. Ewald: There they (the Israelites) stood. Should not war against the sons of impiety reach them in Gibeah? Keil: There, that is, in the same sin, they stood, *i. e.*, remained; the war against the sons of iniquity did not reach them in Gibeah, that is, the war

once waged by the other tribes of Israel against the tribe of Benjamin, on account of the infamous deed of the men of Gibeah, did not reach the Ten Tribes, *i. e.*, they were destroyed by no such war like others of the Israelites, though they did not less deserve such a fate, therefore God will punish them now. But the translation is forced. Wünsche perhaps explains better, though much might be said against his translation also: They stood there — that war might not reach them in Gibeah — beside the sons of iniquity. The passage accordingly says in what the sin of Israel in the days of Gibeah had consisted, namely in this, that they, the Benjamites, had stood by the Levites in Gibeah = the sons of iniquity against the rest of the Israelites. Esth. ix. 16; viii. 11 are cited in proof that עָמַד with עַל has the sense of standing by [assisting]. [The translation assigned above to Keil, which is also that of E. V., is approved by Cowles. Instead of being "forced" it is evidently the most simple and natural. Henderson translates: shall not the war against the unjust overtake them in Gibeah? See Textual note. — M.]

Ver. 10. בְּאַוָּתִי: in my desire = when or as I will. [Keil: "An anthropomorphic description of the severity of the chastisement."] To take part in the infliction of chastisement, nations will be gathered against Israel. The reference is to the war against the sons of iniquity (ver. 9). [This reference is not clear unless the construction of Ewald and Henderson given above be adopted. — M.] The last hemistich is difficult. The Kethibh is עֵינוֹתָם. According to Fürst from עַיִן in the sense of nothingness = אַיִן, therefore in the concrete: idol-image. Keri עוֹנֹתָם = sins. According to the first explanation, idol-images = calves. The latter is probably correct as referred by Keil to the double sin of apostasy from Jehovah and from the royal house of David. The whole clause would therefore be: When I bind them to their two transgressions (namely, by punishing them) so that they must drag them, so to speak, as an oppressive burden. The sense may, however, be simply: on account of their two transgressions. The image of the heifer in the next verse is anticipated here. [The explanation last given is now usually followed and is the most probable. Raschi and Ewald translate: before their two eyes, *i. e.*, openly. The rendering: furrows, in E. V. follows the Targum and the majority of the Rabbins. — M.]

Ver. 11. מְלֻמָּדָה, taught, trained for work. **Which loves to thresh**: According to many expositors this refers to the circumstance that threshing is the lighter work, in which, besides, the heifer may eat at her pleasure, and hence is an image of the pleasant and prosperous condition of Israel. According to others the *tert. comp.* is the treading, and hence the victorious power and dominion of Israel, as under Jeroboam II. would be represented with the accessory notion of a violent treatment of those who had been subdued. But now the situation of Israel would be different. [This is the more common and certainly the preferable explanation. So Henderson, Cowles, and other English Expositors. — M.] **I will pass over her fair neck** — in a hostile sense = I will place a yoke upon her. טוּב: beauty, alluding to her fatness. אַרְכִּיב: I will cause to be driven = I will yoke, namely, for ploughing and harrowing. The compulsory endurance of severe toil appears here in complete contrast to the preceding situation. Judah shall share the same fate. This is mentioned only incidentally and in comparison with Ephraim; but the similar lot of the former is constantly alluded to. Jacob, here mentioned along with Judah, probably = Ephraim. לוֹ shall harrow for himself, forcibly expressing strongly that this toil is not spared him. [So also Keil; but this explanation seems unnatural. Others, as Fausset, translate: break the clods before him; but the preposition must be unduly forced to make it convey such a sense. The best way is to regard it as a pleonasm. Comp. Gen. xii. 1; Job xv. 28; Sol. Song ii. 17, and many other passages. — M.]

Vers. 12, 13. The image of ploughing and harrowing leads to that of sowing and reaping. But the discourse turns from the threatening, which holds out the prospect of punishment, to an exhortation to return (in order to escape punishment), which is then (ver. 13) supported by an allusion to the present conduct of the people (under the same figure). **According to righteousness.** The divine righteousness, by its being sown, *i. e.*, by its operation, should be their determining principle, be their norm and standard. חֶסֶד is then to be understood of the mercy of God. The harvest will, if they sow thus, be determined by the mercy of God (not merely by desert), shall be bountiful and of good quality; this mercy itself shall be the harvest. Keil understands צְדָקָה to mean justice towards their fellow-men, חֶסֶד of (condescending) love (towards the despised), and explains the clause thus: sow righteousness as the seed; the fruit will be love. But קָצַר has too clearly the signification "the divine reward of Israel's religious and moral sowing" (Wünsche). נִירוּ נִיר, to plough new soil. The words go back now beyond the sowing. Israel does not merely need to scatter the true seed; it needs a new soil and must therefore begin anew. The explanation of צֶדֶק is again difficult. It could be taken in the sense of salvation, blessing, so that the bestowal of salvation and blessings would be the consequence of seeking the Lord. In not a few passages this signification is most appropriate, and the usual meaning will not suit here. We expect the mention not of a moral quality, but of its consequences. Keil explains: "God rains righteousness not merely in giving the power to gain it, as He gives rain for the growth of the seed (comp. Is. xliv. 3), but also because He himself must create it and inform the soul with it by his Spirit" (Ps. li. 12). This in itself is quite true, but is it proper to speak of raining or pouring out righteousness? This differs altogether from the expression: to pour out the Spirit. [This figurative expression would be quite characteristic of the style of Hosea. It would be only another instance of the boldness and freedom of his imagery. The figure is double, including also a metonymy, in which righteousness, the effect of the outpouring of the Spirit, is put for the cause itself. Many, following the Syr., Targ., and Vulg., take יוֹרֶה = He will teach. — M.]

Ver. 13, as it now stands, says that iniquity

has been ploughed; iniquity is the soil which they cultivated, and the seed and the harvest corresponded to it. From wickedness there resulted wickedness. One step further still than the harvest is taken in the following words: **Ye have eaten the fruit of lying** = the fruit which deceives. The result of this conduct is nothing, no profit but disaster and ruin. The cause is still more specially indicated; in other words, the false conduct of Israel is characterized: **since thou didst trust**, etc., namely, instead of in Jehovah.

Ver. 14. **Among thy peoples.** People either = military host, or as in the Pentateuch = tribe. **As Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel.** This fact is not known from history, and the explanation is therefore uncertain. According to the usual opinion Shalman is a contraction for Shalmaneser, the name of the Assyrian king who destroyed the kingdom of the Ten Tribes[1] (2 Kings xvii. 6). Fürst understands an older Assyrian king before Pul, since the name Shalmaneser never appears shortened to Shalman, and the Assyrians never engaged in a destructive battle with Israel, and Shalmaneser destroyed Samaria forty years later (after Hosea). Beth-arbel, according to him, is Beth-arbel near Gargamela, made famous later by the victory of Alexander the Great. Keil supposes that the Prophet, since the conquest of such a distant city would scarcely have been known to the Israelites, could not have held up the destruction of this city before them as an example, and would therefore understand the Arbela in Upper Galilee, between Saphoris and Tiberias, mentioned in 1 Macc. ix. 2, and later by Josephus.

Ver. 15. The subject of עָשָׂה is either Shalman (if = Shalmaneser) or Jehovah, of whom the Assyrian king is the instrument, or (as the Targum and also Keil) Bethel, because that city prepared the way for the ruin which befell Israel. **Evil of your evil** = the most extreme evil (comp. Ewald, § 313 c.). בַּשַּׁחַר: in the early morning, probably = early, not: at the time when prosperity shall seem to be dawning or near (Keil). There is not the remotest hint of this in the context. The **king of Israel**, naturally collective = the kingdom of Israel.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. "In the midst of the calf-worship established by Jeroboam, the Israelites still would keep before them the God of Israel; but this resulted in a divided heart, a halting between two opinions (ver. 2). And when their prosperity became undermined by God's judgments, the smiting of a guilty conscience told them of their sin; but that was not a repentance unto life. The improvement of circumstances which the Israelites sought in the schism of Jeroboam cost them dear. For, since he led them away from the fear of God, the help which was to have been expected from his government was already undermined. The sinner awakened by chastisement discovers this deception of sin much more readily than he discovers his obligation to return to God with a contrite heart" (Rieger).

2. One chief element in God's judgment upon Israel was the destruction of the seats of worship (comp. ch. viii.), and here, more particularly, the carrying away of the idol-gods by the enemy (vers. 5, 6). Both the nothingness of idolatry and the great guilt of Israel are here unmistakably exhibited. With this are connected the destruction of the kingdom (vers. 7, 15) and the conquest of the country. Freedom is lost; instead of it comes slavery (ver. 11). The anguish of the judgment is most forcibly depicted (ver. 8) in expressions which, in Luke xxiii. 30, are employed to set forth the distress occasioned by the destruction of Jerusalem, but, in Rev. vi. 16, to describe the terror of "the great day of the Lord." Thus the description of the judgment announced by Hosea is of such a character as to be a type of the final judgment, even though Hosea himself does not designate it "the day of the Lord." The distress of a late repentance is expressed in ver. 3. It is a part of the judgment, since it consists in vain self-reproaches, all too late. In our chapter again the necessary connection between the judgment and sin is emphasized by the image of the sowing and the reaping: from an evil sowing nothing can come but an evil harvest. The expected reward must only be a manifest deception: "the fruit of lying."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. This was the result of God's mercy. God makes the vine and also gives the growth and the precious fruit. And as long as God's favor lasts, so long are men like such a plant. A beautiful image of a life blessed by God, and as true of nations as of individuals. But it is a deplorable thing that man usually cannot bear his prosperity, and that, instead of being led by God's goodness to repentance and nearer to God, he rather forgets Him (see at ch. ii. 9). The fruits are not given back to God. Thus is God often defrauded of the fruits which men owe to Him; and "idols," the world, and the flesh, enjoy what are his.

[MATTHEW HENRY: What we do not rightly employ we may justly expect to be emptied of. It is a great affront to God and a great abuse of his goodness, when, the more mercies we receive from Him, the more sins we commit against Him. — M.]

Ver. 2. The state of the heart is the source of the evil. As long as this does not belong to Him, so long will men rob Him of his own. God will have the heart as his alone, and suffers none to share that possession.

Vers. 5, 6. [PUSEY: Without the grace of God men mourn, not their sins, but their idols.

FAUSSET: Separated from God all human power is weakness, and all apparent stability fluctuating and perishing as the foam. The fear of God is the only true basis of solidity and permanence. — M.]

Ver. 8. A fearful expression of the despair with which impiety shall at last end: a type of the anguish of the lost at the last judgment.

[FAUSSET: Surely it is infinitely better to pray to Jesus now to "cover" our transgressions with the blood of his atonement, than through neglect of this to have to cry to the mountains at last, "Fall on us and cover us." Our prayer to Jesus, if offered in faith now, shall surely be heard; but prayer to the mountains then shall be in vain. — M.]

Ver. 11. BERLENBURGER BIBLE: The pride which exalts itself and does not fear before Him

1 [The Assyrian monuments show that it was Sargon, the son of Shalmaneser, who destroyed Samaria. The passage cited above simply speaks of "the king of Assyria." — M.]

who is the God of the whole earth, must be abased. O, that Ephraim would submit himself and his neck to the yoke of the gentle and humble Lamb!

Ver. 12. BERLENBURGER BIBLE: When a man redeems uncultivated soil he restores it to the one to whom it rightly belongs. For he is the only one who can redeem it. We have received from God his soil, and as we have no strength to make it profitable, it remains untilled. But as soon as God sees that we would break up this uncultivated ground, and we, feeling our inability, seek help in Him, He ploughs it Himself with the ploughshare of the cross. Then He sows righteousness in it, and makes it fruitful in itself, that it may bear much fruit in Christ.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Let them break up the fallow ground; let them cleanse their hearts from all corrupt affections and lusts which are as weeds and thorns, and let them be humbled for their sins, and be of a broken and contrite spirit in the sense of them; let them be full of sorrow and shame at the remembrance of them, and prepare to receive the divine precepts, as the ground that is ploughed is to receive the seed that it may take root. See Jer. iv. 3.

FAUSSET: Grace used well is rewarded gratuitously with more grace. — M.]

Ver. 13. The fruit of sin is ever the "fruit of lies." For sin always deceives those who serve it. Going in our own ways and trusting to human power is shown especially to be deceptive.

[FAUSSET: Only when we mistrust ourselves, and trust in the Lord and his righteousness alone, are we safe, justified, and blessed. — M.]

III. MERCY.

CHAPTER XI.

God cannot utterly destroy Israel, whom He has always loved, though they have so basely requited Him, but will again show Mercy unto them.

CHAPTER XI. 1–11.

1 WHEN Israel was a youth, then I loved Him,
And out of Egypt I called my son.
2 They [the Prophets] called them; so (often) they turned away from them;
They sacrificed to the Baals,
They burnt incense to the idol-gods.
3 And I led Ephraim along,[1] —
He took them[2] upon his arm; —
Yet they knew not that I healed them.
4 With the bands of a man I drew them,
With cords of love;
And I was towards them,
As those that would raise the yoke-strap over their jaws,
And I reached out to them to eat.[3]
5 They will not return to the land of Egypt,
But Assyria,[4] it is their king,
For they refused to return.
6 And the sword goes its rounds in their cities,
And destroys their bars [defenses],
And devours them for their devices.
7 And my people incline to fall away from me;[5]
They [the Prophets] call them (to look) upwards,
All together they refuse to raise themselves.

8 How should I give thee up, Ephraim?
How should I surrender thee, Israel?
How should I make thee like Admah,
Set thee like Zeboim?
My heart is turned within me;
My repentings are kindled together.
9 I will not execute the fierceness of my anger,
I will not again destroy Ephraim:
For I am God and not man;

In the midst of thee is a Holy One,
And I will not come in wrath.
10 They will follow the Lord :
Like a lion He will roar ;
Yea He will roar, and children from the sea will come trembling [hasten] ;
11 Will hasten like a bird from Egypt,
And like a dove from Assyria :
Then will I make them dwell in their houses, saith Jehovah.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 3. — תִּרְגַּלְתִּי, from תִּרְגִּיל = הִרְגִּיל, Hiphil from רָגַל : to make to walk, to lead, construed with ל, [Comp. Jer. xii. 5 ; xxii. 15, and see Ewald, § 122 *a*, Green, § 94 *a*. The corresponding Syriac (*shargel*) means : to mislead. — M.]

2 Ver. 3. — קָחָם instead of לְקָחָם.

3 Ver. 4. — וָאַט, usually regarded as first fut. Hiphil, from נטה, instead of וָאֵט = and I inclined myself. Others take it to be an adverb : softly, gently. אֵלָיו would then be best connected with it : and gently towards them, I gave them food. אוֹכִיל for אַאֲכִיל.

4 Ver. 5. — וְאַשּׁוּר is adversative. הוּא emphasizes Assyria in contrast to Egypt.

5 Ver. 7. — מְשׁוּבָתִי. The suffix is here used in a subjective sense = apostasy from me.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. Jehovah calls to mind the love which He had displayed to Israel ages before. But it was rewarded with unfaithfulness, and they must be the more severely punished. See Ex. iv. 22 f. Israel was Jehovah's first-born son, because they were chosen as the people of his inheritance. Hence the love of God, which redeemed them from Egypt, in order to give to their fathers the Land of Promise. On the citation of this passage in Matt. ii. 15 f., see the Doctrinal Section.

Ver. 2. **They called**, namely, the prophets. As the prophets called, so (כֵּן) they refused to listen — turned away from their (the prophets') faces. בְּעָלִים, see ch. ii. 15. [Henderson : "The use of the verb : to call, in the preceding verse, suggested the idea of the subsequent messages which had been delivered to the Israelites by the prophets, to which Hosea now appeals, in order to contrast with the means which had been employed for their reformation, the obstinate character of their rebellion." — M.]

Ver. 3. A further description of the love of God displayed towards Israel, chiefly in the march through the wilderness. **He took them upon his arms.** The sudden transition to the third person is to be explained from the fact that it is the prophet that is speaking in the name of Jehovah, and that this can therefore easily pass over into a discourse by Jehovah. Comp. Deut. i. 31 ; Ex. xv. 26, for the same thoughts.

Ver. 4. **With bands of a man** = such as those with which men, especially children, would be led, opposed to ropes, with which beasts are tied, = cords of love in the next hemistich. "This image leads on to the similar one of the yoke laid upon cattle to yoke them in for work." In this image gentle treatment is implied ; for comparison is made with one who takes the yoke, or rather the strap with which it is secured, and which passes through the mouth, and draws it back over the jaws so that the animal may eat conveniently. Jehovah in his conduct towards Israel is like such a gentle master. Literally : I was to them as those who raise the yoke over their jaws. But the opinion of Keil is far-fetched, who thinks that there is a definite allusion to the commands laid upon the people, which God had made light for them, partly by many displays of his mercy, and partly by the means of grace in their religion. The *tert. comp.* is simply the gentleness, the kind consideration shown to them in his dealings towards them. [Though, of course, this general reference includes, with other manifestations of kindness, the special application made by Keil. For the construction and rendering of the last clause, see the Grammatical Note. — M.]

Ver. 5. **They shall not return to the land of Egypt.** An apparent contradiction of ch. viii. 13 ; ix. 3. But, as may be seen there, Egypt is in those passages only a type of the land of bondage. But here Egypt is employed in the literal sense, just as in ver. 1, to which our verse alludes. "The people of Jehovah shall not return to the land from which He called them, in order that it may not seem as though the design of the exodus and the march through the desert were frustrated through their impenitence. But they shall enter into another bondage." **To return**, namely, to Jehovah.

Ver. 6. וְחָלָה, from חוּל, to describe a circle, to move in a circle, as it were, to make the rounds ; spoken of a sword = to rage. **Their bars**, the bars of the strong cities = their gates. These will be destroyed, and the cities be captured, and laid waste. [Others, as Gesenius and Cowles, take the word in a metaphorical sense, which is frequent : rulers, defenders. But the former is preferable, as being more directly connected with the *strong* cities. E. V. adopts the first derived sense of the word : branches. Calvin, following the same view, interpreted branches as = villages, the branches of the cities. In this he is followed by Fausset. — M.]

Ver. 7 returns again to the sin of the people. תְּלֻאִים is here used intransitively : hang over, to incline. אֶל־עַל : above (comp. vii. 16). They (the prophets) call them. יְרוֹמֵם, here probably intransitive (the strengthened Kal) = raise themselves, strive to rise. [The passage may be thus

paraphrased: "My people are bent on turning away from me. Though the prophets call upon them to look above (to the Most High), yet with one accord they refuse to raise themselves up." — M.]

Ver. 8. Still Jehovah cannot utterly blot out his people. The love with which He has loved them still endures and breaks forth strongly. **How could I give thee up,** etc. This is still at first a continuation of the threatening. Chastisement even to utter destruction, is justified = how I should, how just it would be to give thee up! But with this expression thus justifying the punishment, the threatening is exhausted and satisfied. It is just the contemplation of the great measure of the suffering which would really be deserved which leads to the feeling that such punishment, however justifiable, cannot be executed, and that it shall be restrained = I should do this, but how terrible it would be! no, it cannot be. Thus the threatening having reached its climax, brings itself to its end. Others translate: how should I? = how should it be possible, that, etc.? = I cannot do so. But then there is no transition from ver. 7 to ver. 8. [This, the most common view, is certainly correct. There is no need of any intermediate words between the threatening and the relenting. The true theory with regard to the relation between God and the people is this, that God must be considered as all the time melting with love towards the people whom He must reject. Hence the frequent and seemingly unprepared words of promise in the book, suddenly appearing after long denunciations. No transition is needed. It is supplied by that constant yearning love of which wrath and mercy are the negative and the positive poles. The other view has to encounter the very difficulty which it seeks to obviate. For the transition would only be more abrupt from the justification of extreme punishment to its abandonment; and the difficulty is greater, because such transition would occur in the middle of a verse, and not with the beginning of a new one. — M.] **Like Admah, — like Zeboim**: comp. Deut. xxix. 22, where these two cities are expressly mentioned, as having been destroyed together with Sodom and Gomorrah, which in Gen. xix. 24 stand alone. **My heart is changed within me** — so that wrath has disappeared. [For a like use of the preposition עַל, comp. Jer. viii. 18; Ps. xlii. 6, 12; xliii. 5. — M.]

Ver. 9. **I will not return to destroy Ephraim.** "After my heart has been once changed with the resolve not to punish, I will not change it again." This is supported by the consideration that God is God and not a changeable man. עִיר : בְּעִיר is here probably = glow, heat of wrath. [E. V. has: into the city, which would have been בָּעִיר, and which gives no pertinent sense. This rendering is now almost universally abandoned, but it is, strange to say, approved by Pusey and Fausset, the latter of whom speaks of the other translation as held "needlessly." — M.]

Ver. 10. The consequence of the Lord's compassion; He will call, and the people, following Him, will return home from banishment. **They shall go after the Lord.** This probably involves both the changed, converted heart, and the walking in God's ways thence resulting. **Will roar like a lion.** The point of comparison is not the terrifying influence of the sound, but its extent. It reaches far and near. Thus must the cry be when it calls the people to their restoration. Or is it implied that these displays of mercy towards Israel are coupled with judgments upon the heathen? Hosea does not allude to this elsewhere. Trembling will be a consequence of this call, but it implies chiefly haste united with anxiety not to neglect the summons, and therefore the eagerness of obedience. Hence also the comparison with birds.

Ver. 11. **From the sea** = from the west, as well as from Egypt and Assyria. The notion is: from all quarters of the earth (comp. Is. xi. 11).

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. Israel became "God's son," by virtue of their being chosen as God's peculiar people, according to Ex. iv. 22 f. The bestowal of this privilege, confirmed by the deliverance from Egypt, and sealed by the ratification at Sinai, forms the first step in God's redemptive work, which is completed by the incarnation of his Son for the redemption of the world. The whole development and leading of Israel as God's people terminate upon Christ not as though Israel were begotten as the Son of God, but in such a way as that the relation which the Lord of Heaven and earth established and preserved between Himself and this people prepared and foreshadowed the union of God and Man, and laid the way for the Incarnation of his Son by training this people as a vessel of the Divine mercy. All the important events in Israel's history bore upon this, and thereby became types and actual prophecies of the life of Him, in whom the reconciliation of God and man should be effected, and the union of God with the human race unfold itself as a Personal Unity. In this sense is the second half of ver. 1 quoted in Matt. ii. 15, as a prophecy of Christ (Keil). But here we must stop. The further remark of Keil, in justification of the reference of this passage to Christ, goes too far and is not direct, when he says that it was made "because the residence in Egypt and the leading out from it had the same significance in the unfolding of Christ's life, as they had for the people of Israel. As Israel in Egypt, free from contact with the Canaanites, grew into a nation, so was the child Jesus concealed in Egypt from the enmity of Herod."

2. There is here presented to Israel in an affecting manner the love with which God had assumed the care of them in their beginnings, "when they were still young," and made them what they were. And such love is represented as being so tender, all-considerate, helpful, and advancing, that it finds its image only in the love of a father or mother to a child. Jehovah called Israel his son in their early days, when He brought them out of Egypt. Ex. iv. 22 f. He had always acted towards them as became that relation, and displayed to them the love of a father toward his child, even his youngest child. As Jehovah's love and faithfulness to Israel in the years of their manhood finds its fitting symbol only in the love and faithfulness of a husband, so his love and care of Israel in their childhood is compared with the solicitous, tender love of a father. So much the more inexcusable then is the conduct of Israel towards God, the opposition which they displayed towards Him from the beginning. This base ingratitude characterized them continually, and does also in the present. Their present conduct is only the direct continuation of the former. Observe the description of such conduct of Israel toward their God in ver. 2:

idolatry before the very eyes of the God who had displayed such love to them; ver. 7: failure to recognize God's purposes of salvation; see also vers. 7, 9. A special proof of Jehovah's love was the sending of the prophets; they call the people upwards = that they should return to God, but they will not raise themselves; they remain below, averse from God.

3. No wonder, therefore, if a people, who reward so basely and mistake the love of God, are visited by Him with the severest judgments (comp. vers. 6, 8). But retributive and punitive justice finds in our Prophet, as we may satisfy ourselves in every chapter, where accusation and threatening are pealed forth incessantly, such appalling expression, that we can no longer decline the question: "Are not these things spoken revengefully? is it not a spirit of vindictiveness that has inspired such words?" It cannot be claimed that human revenge bears any part here, for it is not the offering of personal injuries of which the prophet announces the punishment, but he is indignant in God's behalf, over Israel's sins against God, and announces their punishment. In this, moreover, it is to be borne in mind that the prophet was never a mere passive organ (as the mechanical inspiration theory would have it) of the prophetic utterances, that his own faculties certainly were not at the time overborne, but were elevated, and that these announcements of judgment in the midst of a ruined generation are to be regarded as energic expressions of the life of faith, faith in the Holy One of Israel. On the other hand, the subjectivity of the prophet is not to be unduly emphasized, as though his purely human feelings and emotions were really the source of these threatenings. We must hold to the truth that the prophets were heralds of that which was revealed to them by the Spirit of God (comp. ch. vi. 5), and that their separate efficiency was exerted only by completely entering by faith into this divine revelation, in their affirmation of it through faith. But the question then assumes this form: Though the Prophet himself does not merit the reproach of a selfish spirit, should not this reproach so much the rather fall upon God Himself, whose (conscious) organ the prophet was? But it is evident that the retribution announced is to be sent in a spirit of strict justice; it is to be a punishment of sin justly deserved. The punishment is closely related to the sins rebuked, and in close connection with them; it is punishment and not vengeance, which usually exceeds the measure of desert. But certainly we are not merely to trace back these threatenings to a dead law of just recompense; the punishment is not merely in accordance with the moral order of the world, according to which sin is followed by its own punishment. It is a personal action, as certainly as the infliction and the threatenings proceed from a personal God. And thus the course of action is not and cannot be unaccompanied by personal "πάθος" or feeling. But this feeling is the emotion of love, love grieved, vilely disowned and rejected. It is true that it must be angry, that it cannot be content without being reciprocated, but must be most intimately stirred up, and the greater, the more deeply seated it is, the more it seeks the good of its object, the more conscious it is that it has neglected nothing, and has been to blame in nothing. For this very reason the punishment assumes the appearance of revenge, and even wears its garments, while in truth it is only sin that is meeting with its deserved punishment according to an inner necessity, and not as the consequence of arbitrary passion. And as this love of God is unselfish and pure and seeks only the good of its object, so this "revenge" of God bears, so to speak, its corrective, that is, its aim in itself. The threatening has, then, a fearfully wide range, and is uttered with a violence which has something painful in it, since the Holy God, free, on his part, from all blame and neglect, appears against the sinner, upon whom alone the responsibility lies. But He does not simply display his anger; He does not cease to love. His wrath does not find its satisfaction in itself by the punishment or destruction of the unfaithful loved one. Actual destruction, which vengeance would demand, is never undertaken. In the background of the threatenings stands the full and flowing stream of love in assurances of mercy and compassion, which, though made in expectation that the people will return, are yet made before such return takes place, and for the purpose of promoting that end. How little the Law, though proceeding from God's well-intentioned love towards Israel, realized its aim, is manifest; Israel had completely broken the covenant founded upon it, and instead of showing themselves to be worthy of the promises attached to it, only rendered themselves amenable to the curse, which they must bear unto the uttermost. Thus love appears in the form of free grace, compassionating the unworthy and coming forth to meet them, so leading to the stand-point of the New Covenant. Hence all these promises, rising up behind the severe threatenings of judgment, are rightly to be regarded as Messianic, even though they are not outwardly marked as such. That an actual annihilation of Israel is not intended, but that the prediction of punishment — thus revealing its origin in pure love which thinks of its object alone, and thus being distinguished from all self-avenging — halts before the last step is reached, has notably been clearly expressed already by the Prophet in his reference to the "remnant" that is still left. It finds in our chapter also its clear expression in ver. 8. Jehovah could and should give up Israel like Admah and Zeboim (not merely destroy the kingdom, deliver it over to Assyria), but He will not do so; and just when the threatening reaches its height, the assurance of fullest mercy breaks forth, and is expressed beautifully in vers. 8–11. If God's love in the beginning of his interest in Israel was something great and exalted (vers. 1–4), it is something greater now, as being in the form of compassion (vers. 9, 10), in which He refuses to give up his people, all unworthy as they had become of the love He had shown them (comp. ver. 11). A return to Jehovah is then announced as the fruit of this compassion, and the removal of the state of subjection to punishment by a restoration to the inheritance they had trifled away is promised as its manifestation. No further description of the future deliverance is as yet given.

4. As to the fulfillment of this promise, see the remarks on chs. i. and ii. It may suffice to repeat here that we are not to hold to any fulfillment which would contradict the actual course of God's revelation. Hence we must not think of a future return of the external Israel into their own land from Assyria, if it were only from the consideration that Assyria exists no longer, and Israel is no longer in bondage to such a nation, and we cannot take the one (Israel, the Holy Land, the return) as literal, and the other (Assyria, captivity) as figurative. We must rather say, from the stand-point of the fulfillment of the Old Testament, *i. e.*, from the stand-point of the New Testament, and in ac-

cordance with the actual course of events: the compassionate mercy of God towards his faithless people, which the Prophet sees win the victory over wrath, has been revealed in Christ — but still as being far greater than he sees it; what is clear to him is only the σκιά of that which in Christ has actually occurred, and what is still going on, in the forgiveness of sin and deliverance from its curse through free grace. The Prophet hopes for this in behalf of his people Israel, but only because they are God's people. But it will be true of all who shall become God's people too, even though they be not of Israel; they will experience this compassionate favor of God, which is essentially identical with the love, in which God has chosen to Himself a people (from the nations), and completes it so that it realizes its purpose in spite of the breach of the covenant on the part of men, manifested in opposition to the Law and apostasy from God. The voice of mercy, which shall resound so powerfully, and towards which those hasten who stand under God's judgment, has reached far and wide through the Gospel, and will again be sounded forth, when Christ shall gather his own from all ends of the earth, and portion out to them the everlasting inheritance which they had forfeited by sin.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. Thou also hast experienced such love of God from thy childhood's years, in temporal and yet more in spiritual things. This love of God is an incontestable truth. It is as important as it is necessary to be reminded of it continually.

RIEGER: God delights to trace back in his Word and in man's conscience everything to its first beginning.

[FAUSSET: God, by sending the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of his people (Gal. iv. 6) as the spirit of adoption, calls them his, while they are still in the Egypt of this world. Indeed He separates them to Himself from the womb, and calls them by his grace, as He did Paul (Gal. i. 15. — M.]

Ver. 2. RIEGER: God is ever calling men back to their first love: but one goes to his farm, another to his merchandise, and most to their worldly idols.

Ver. 3. God's condescension to all our needs. He knows our weakness and treats us accordingly. We must be led along and taken by the arm; else we do not advance, but stumble and fall every moment.

Ver. 4. STARKE: God throws over us the cords of love even to-day, when He calls us through the preaching of his Word, gives us his sacraments, promises and supplies us with every good thing, and visits us with precious afflictions: so we would pray that God would draw us further still after Himself.

RIEGER: God directs us according to our weakness and the riches of his love. And when He must press us with a yoke, He gives us something with it that helps us to bear it, and leaves us at least food and clothing. And He would warn us against falling back in our pride upon our own help, and neglecting to wait for his counsel. But as Israel was always inclined to turn again to Egypt, and would seek help there against God's judgments, so does self-sufficient man always act, resorting to everything rather than submit to the counsel of God.

[FAUSSET: The Son of God becomes *man*, in order to draw *men* as such by the cords of sympathy, as partaking of a common nature with us. His bands of love sit so lightly on those who wear them that they are no hindrance to us in enjoying all that is really good for us, and which God has so richly laid before us. — M.]

Ver. 7. We are called upwards continually: and yet we will not go! All calling upward is then in vain! Our flesh draws us downwards like a weight of lead, and neutralizes the drawings of the Spirit upwards.

Vers. 8, 9. STARKE: God is disposed, when angry, quite differently from men. Men are intent upon vengeance, but God upon reconciliation.

RIEGER: The thought that we have to do with God and not with man, makes it often difficult to our terrified conscience, to seek and believe in the forgiveness of sins. But this is merely a motive to the divine magnanimity to bestow richer favors upon us.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Those who submit to the influence may take the comfort of God's holiness.]

B. SECOND DISCOURSE.

CHAPTERS XII.–XIV.

I. *Accusation.*

CHAPTER XII.

1 Ephraim has surrounded me with lies,
And the house of Israel with deceit:
And Judah still vacillates with God,
With the faithful holy One.[1]
2 Ephraim feeds upon the wind and pursues the east wind;
Every day it increases violence and lying,
And they make a covenant with Assyria,
And oil [as a gift] is carried to Egypt.

3 Jehovah has a contest with Judah
And (He has) to punish Jacob according to his ways,
According to his works he will reward him.
4 In the womb he seized his brother by the heel,
And in his (manly) vigor he strove with God.
5 He wrestled against the angel and prevailed,
He wept and made supplication unto Him:
He found him in Bethel and then He spoke with us.[2]
6 And Jehovah, God of Hosts,
Jehovah is his memorial (name).
7 And thou, turn thou unto thy God,
Observe mercy and justice,
And wait upon thy God continually!

8 Canaan — in his hand (are) the balances of deceit:
He loveth to oppress.
9 And Ephraim says: surely I have become rich,
I have found wealth for myself,
All my gains shall not discover transgression[3] in me,
Which (would be) sin.
10 Yet I, Jehovah, am thy God,
From the land of Egypt,
Still I make thee dwell in tents,
As in the day of the Feast (of Tabernacles).
11 And I spoke to the prophets,
And multiplied visions,
And through the prophets gave similitudes.
12 Is not Gilead iniquity?
Surely they have become wickedness.
In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls,
Their sacrifices also are like heaps[4]
On the furrows of the field.
13 And Jacob fled to the fields of Aram,
And Israel served for a wife, and for a wife kept (sheep).
14 And Jehovah led Israel from Egypt by a prophet,
And by a prophet was it guarded.
15 Ephraim has provoked bitter anger;[5]
He [God] will[6] leave his blood upon him,
And will return to him his disgrace.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — קְדוֹשִׁים: is an intensive plural [plural of majesty], like אֱלֹהִים, and therefore coupled with a sing. adjective [comp. Ps. vii. 10].

[2 Ver. 5. — עִמָּנוּ. Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, Syr. *et al.* render: with him, as if they had read עִמּוֹ. But there is no variety of reading in the MSS. For the propriety of the reading in the Text., comp. the Exegetical Remarks. — M.]

3 Ver. 9. — עָוֹן is perhaps employed as a word-play upon the preceding אוֹן.

4 Ver. 12. — גַּלִּים, a word-play with גִּלְגָּל.

5 Ver. 15. — תַּמְרוּרִים is here used as an adverb. [Comp. Green, § 274, 2 *e*.

[6 Ver. 15. — אֲדֹנָיו is the subject of יִטּוֹשׁ as well as of יָשִׁיב. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Ephraim has surrounded me with lying.** Israel's conduct towards Jehovah was lying and deceit. He reckoned upon attachment and fidelity, and might well do so, as being their rightful Lord. But instead of this they turn away from Him and to idols, and seek help in the heathen, and not in God. They surrounded Him: it was no isolated act; it was the general practice; He was treated so by all Israel. רָד. The meaning is uncertain. The word occurs only be-

sides in Gen. xxvii. 40; Ps. lv. 3; Jer. ii. 31. Probably = rove about, vacillate, therefore: **and Judah vacillates still with God** = does not remain faithful to Him. Others see here rather a commendation of Judah, and take רוּד = רָדָה, to tread down, subdue: prevails still with God. Löwe accordingly explains the last hemistich differently from the usual method. He joins נֶאֱמָן also to יְהוּדָה, and translates: faithful towards the Holy One. The connection of the clauses might justify such a view. But such a contrast between Judah and Ephraim, in which Judah is as strongly commended as Ephraim is accused of unfaithfulness, is hardly suitable here. Jehovah has a controversy with Judah (ver. 3), comp. iv. 1; not to speak of the character and course of conduct ascribed to Judah in x. 11; v. 5, 10, 12, 13, 14. Judah is indeed differently characterized from Israel, but the difference lies in the term: vacillate. It could not be said that the former was firm and faithful. The two words are therefore to be taken together = the faithful holy One. God is called holy in strong contrast to the conduct of Judah.

Ver. 2. רוּחַ an image of nothingness, vanity, קָדִים: **east wind,** a hot wind coming from the Arabian desert, which dries up everything in its course. [Comp. Job xxvii. 21. See the appendix to Delitzsch on Job.—M.] As in the case of רוּחַ, the destructive, and not merely the unprofitable, is here the *tert. comp.* The second member thus probably contains an inference from the first = because Ephraim loves what is vain, it pursues —certainly without meaning it—that which entails destruction. **Lying and violence,** probably towards their neighbors, especially if we compare ver. 7, where they are admonished to preserve mercy and justice. **Bear oil to Egypt,** namely, as a gift, in order to win the alliance of Egypt; comp. 2 Kings xvii. 4. At one time help is sought in Egypt against Assyria, and at another in Assyria against Egypt.

Ver. 3. **Jehovah has a contest** = has sins to reprove; comp. iv. 1. This time the controversy is with Judah. In distinction from Judah, Jacob denotes, as in x. 11, the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, Israel. The name Jacob forms a transition to the allusion to the patriarch Jacob (vers. 4, 5).

Vers. 4, 5. **In the womb,** etc. Jacob was to be a type of his descendants by his struggling for the birth-right, and his wrestling with God in which he prevailed through prayer and supplication. That Jacob's conduct is not held up here to the people as a warning example of cunning and deceit, but as one of earnest striving after the birth-right and its blessings, is apparent from the wrestling with God mentioned in the second member of the verse (comp. Gen. xxxii. 23–29). The two members of the verse form a close parallel and at the same time a climax—4 *a:* in the womb; 4 *b:* in manhood; 4 *a:* but seizes the heel, a secret, indeed, not an open struggle as was only possible in the womb, but 4 *b:* he wrestled, in the full sense; 4 *a:* with his brother; 4 *b:* with God. There is something also in the two names chosen, which also indicate a climax: Jacob from seizing the heel, and the more honored name Israel from wrestling with God. The struggle with God is more particularly described in ver. 5. God appeared to him in the form of an angel. וַיֻּכָל is taken from Gen. xxxii. 39. **He wept and prayed to him.** These words indicate the nature of the conflict, the weapons with which he conquered. **At Bethel he found him.** At the very place where idolatry and moral corruption prevail, Jacob found God. This shows the issue of the conflict, and alludes to Gen. xxxv. 9 ff., where God bestowed upon Jacob his name Israel and renewed the promise of blessing. **And then He spoke with us,** namely, with Jacob; what God then promised to Jacob applies to us, his children. The mention of the conflict with God and especially its issue, in ver. 5, show clearly that Jacob is not here referred to as a warning example of deceit, but that something typical is discovered in his action. See the Doctrinal remarks.

Ver. 6 then more specially marks the God who spoke, as Jehovah, God of Hosts,—scarcely without the design of placing Him, the only true God, in contrast to the gods now worshipped in Bethel. While God is specially designated Jehovah, in view of his revelation of Himself to Israel, He is called "God of Hosts" to show his supreme exaltation. And Israel could prefer idols to such a God as this! [The second member of the verse: **Jehovah (is) his memorial,** means that Jehovah is the name by which Israel was to remember Him. Comp. Ex. iii. 15; Ps. cxxxv. 13.—M.]

Ver. 7. For this reason Ephraim is exhorted to return to this God, an admonition further explained in the words which follow: **observe mercy and justice, and wait upon God continually.** Israel is now far from doing this.

Vers. 8, 9. This passage again begins with a description of the sinful conduct of Israel, which is made incisively by calling Israel Canaan, with an allusion also to the appellative signification of the word: merchant. They are like a dishonest merchant, who aims to become rich by deceit, from which results the oppression of the poor. This deceit is not to be taken out of its literal sense, as in ver. 1 (of idolatry as deceit practiced towards God), but is according to the context to be understood literally. The very opposite is practiced of that which is required in ver. 7, mercy and justice. אוֹן here = means. יְגִיעַ = the results of labor. **No injustice which would be sin** = would entail punishment. In all his labor they would not be able to discover anything worthy of punishment.

Ver. 10. God reminds the deluded and presumptuous Ephraim (in order to bring home to it the folly and injustice of its insolent speeches), how He had been its benefactor since leaving Egypt, and had led it hitherto as a Father, as once He had done in the wilderness. "Not merely during the forty years wandering through the desert had the people enjoyed the wondrous protection of their God; even now—עוֹד—they still experienced his mercy. The expression 'dwelling in tents' accordingly alludes not merely to the privations and toils of the temporary wanderings in the wilderness, but also specially to the abundant blessings of God in the present (comp. 2 Kings xiii. 5)." מוֹעֵד = the Feast of Tabernacles. **As in the days of the feast** = as the yearly dwelling in tents in a literal sense at the Feast calls to mind that protection afforded them in the desert. Others take the dwelling in tents to be a threat. But this does not suit the beginning of the verse,

which is an allusion to a deed of divine mercy (comp. xiii. 4).

Ver. 11 continues to call to mind what God had done to Israel. עַל: "because the divine revelation, descending from heaven, reached to the prophets" (Keil). **I spoke**: probably a general reference, specified in the following clauses.—אֲדַמֶּה: to compare, to use figurative language. [Henderson: "In such language, including metaphor, allegory, comparison, prosopopœia, apostrophe, hyperbole, etc., the prophets abound. They accommodated themselves to the capacity and understanding of their hearers by couching the high and important subjects of which they treated under the imagery of sensible objects, and invested them with a degree of life and energy which could only be resisted by an obstinate determination not to listen to religious instruction. —M.]

Ver. 12. The intermediate thought is probably: all was vain; Israel apostatized from his God. Therefore the punishment must come. "Gilead and Gilgal represented the two parts of the northern kingdom. Gilead the eastern, Gilgal the western." אִם is difficult here. "When" is unsuitable. Hence it is probably to be taken as an interrogative particle: **Is not Gilead**, etc. Gilead is here called אָוֶן, directly (vi. 8, a city of those who work iniquity); worthlessness, iniquity. אַךְ yea, surely = altogether. שָׁוְא parallel with אָוֶן. The moral ruin has its counterpart in the physical = become a nothing, be annihilated. [It is better to take both words as relating to moral corruption: iniquity, evil. The expressions are virtually synonymous, and the combination is intensive.—M.] שְׁוָרִים, accusative, not: to the bulls. This sacrifice was no sin in itself, but it was so as being done in Gilgal in honor of the idols. See iv. 15; ix. 15.

Vers. 13, 14. The great deeds of God for Israel are once more referred to, the ancient times being again recalled. There is again an allusion to Jacob, and as vers. 4, 5 referred to his actions, so here we have his misfortunes, his humiliation; how he had to take to flight, serve for a wife, and that by keeping sheep. We are then to supply: **And yet I have guarded and blessed him.** To this then would follow in ver. 14, a further example of God's care. But more probably ver. 14 is to be taken together with ver. 13, and then is seen in that servitude of the progenitor the beginning of the bondage of his immediate descendants in Egypt. The sense would then be: and how has God concerned Himself for Israel (in the name Israel the person of Jacob and the nation would be united), and defended them! Comp. Deut. xxvi. 5 ff., where the bondage in Egypt is connected immediately with Jacob and even with his flight to Mesopotamia. **By a prophet**: The greatness of God's deeds is still more clearly shown: God raised up and employed a prophet specially for this object. If vers. 13 and 14 are taken together, נִשְׁמָר perhaps alludes to שָׁמָר, ver. 14; from protecting he came to be protected. It is also possible that the second בְּנָבִיא forms a contrast to the second בְּאִשָּׁה, one being a mark of humiliation, the other of exaltation.

Ver. 15. Instead of acknowledging what God had done to the nation, and thanking Him therefor humbly (which according to Deut. xxvi. 5 ff., was to be done by the yearly offering of the first-fruits), Ephraim bitterly excited God's anger. Therefore the Lord would punish them. דָּמָיו = his blood-guiltiness. יִטּוֹשׁ, to leave alone, opposite to taking away or forgiving. **His disgrace**, probably that which Israel casts upon God.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The way in which Jacob is mentioned in this chapter is peculiar. In vers. 4, 5 mention is made of two events recorded in Genesis: that which, according to Gen. xxv. 26, he did in seizing his brother's heel in the womb, and that which, according to Gen. xxxii. 24, he did as a man. These two are placed in mutual relation: and the expressions which describe them are clearly parallel. Moreover they form a climax. They were analogous; but the second was an essential advance upon the first (as really as manhood is an advance upon pre-natal existence). Hence the first is only briefly indicated; forms only the starting-point. The stress is laid upon the second, upon which the discourse dwells longer (ver. 5). If it should excite surprise that just these two events should be made prominent and compared as they are here, it must be remembered that in Genesis the two names of the patriarch are said to have been connected with them, and in such a way as that the second is an advance upon the first. Accordingly we can briefly indicate the meaning of this reference to Jacob thus: He who was a Jacob (holder of the heel) even in his mother's womb, became afterwards in his manhood an Israel, a wrestler with God. The former was, so to speak, the beginning of the latter; the latter the completion of the former. The Prophet sees in the record of that seizing of the heel, something significant, namely, an allusion to the precedence which Jacob, although the second-born *κατὰ φύσιν*, should have, by the free elective favor of God, over the first-born who by nature had the preëminence; that he received the divine promises, and even that the action was regarded as an (unconscious) striving of the embryo itself after the possession of that which the divine favor had in store for it. Then what the embryo did unconsciously by struggling, as it were, for the possession of the divine promise, the man did consciously with higher powers by wrestling with God Himself. The Prophet evidently regards the possession of the divine promises as the end and object of the conflicts. Having striven after it in his mother's womb, he gained it from God as a man. Ver. 5 shows how the Prophet understood this struggle with God, or what he regarded as its essence: it was humble but persistent supplication, showing how nearly the matter lay to his heart. This wrestling in prayer had the desired result: he prevailed. The Prophet finds the proof of this in Gen. xxxv. 9 ff. For there in Bethel, Jacob not only had his name Israel confirmed, but the promise was given, which declared him to be the chosen of God: "He spoke with Him." But the Prophet says: "with *us*." This shows that Jacob, in vers. 4, 5, does not mean the individual, but that the Jacob who afterwards proved himself an Israel, becomes an ideal personality, *i. e.*, a type of the true Israel, the true people of God. This picture of the true Jacob-Israel, struggling for the posses-

sion of God's gracious promises, and therefore of the divine blessing, is held up to the shame of the present degenerate Israel, who tread under foot God's election of grace, and defy his judgments. What a contrast does the victorious conflict with God present to the course of Israel seeking to Assyria and Egypt for help! Hence the warning of ver. 7: to return to God and to confide steadfastly in Him. Jacob is mentioned in ver. 13 in another way. It is not his conduct towards God that is there alluded to, but God's dealings with Him — in raising him from his humiliation. And yet not *him* really; for more clearly still than in vers. 4, 5, the person of Jacob and the people of Israel flow into one another, or rather the former is a type of the latter. What is said in ver. 13 of humiliation by flight and servitude, refers primarily to the person of Jacob, but it is to be understood as that by the person the people proceeding from him are thought of. So in ver. 14, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and their preservation in the desert, are marked as the exaltation following, by divine grace, that humiliation. Thus what is here said falls under the point of view elsewhere held by our Prophet of the love which God had shown to Israel in ancient times (comp. also ver. 10), with which Israel's present conduct is then sharply contrasted (comp. ver. 15). But it is mentioned, as something special, that this gracious deed of God was brought about by a prophet. This manifestly serves to make it appear greater. God ordained a prophet for the special task of helping Israel. In ver. 11, also, Prophecy appears as an element of God's gracious dealings with Israel. In vi. 5 prophets were distinguished as the preachers of repentance and judgment sent by God. In our chapter they appear more generally, as the organs of God's revelation to Israel, as the tokens that God stood constantly towards his people in a living relation (as already in Amos ii. 11). The sending of Moses falls under this point of view: in him as a Prophet God entered into a living and gracious relation with Israel and showed Himself to be their God.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. How sad it is that God must so complain of his people! and yet how often is it necessary! He is faithful and true, so well disposed, and we are so insincere towards Him! pretending to serve Him, and yet only serving Him with the lips while the heart is far from Him!

Vers. 4, 5. Starke: God's blessing is to be obtained not by desert, but by weeping and entreaty. Tears and prayers are the true method of struggling with God.

Pfaff. *Bibelwerk:* Great victory and blessing are to be found in prayer; for prayer can ever overcome God. Only struggle on, my soul, and persist until thou dost reach to the very heart of God, and thou wilt certainly receive an answer from Him, if not always outwardly, yet always in the Spirit.

[Fausset: Tears were the indication of one whose words of prayer were no feigned words, but whose heart was deeply moved by the sense of his great needs, and whose feelings were excited by vehement and longing desires. Therefore at Bethel "he found God," because God first "found him," and moved him so to weep and supplicate. And there God spake not only with him but "with us," whosoever of us follow the unconquerable faith of his tearful prayers.

Pusey: There He spake with us, how, in our needs, we should seek and find Him. In loneliness, apart from distractions, in faith rising in proportion to our fears, in persevering prayer, in earnestness, God is sought and found. — M.]

Ver. 6. In the name Jehovah, Israel had the security that God was their God, and they his people. "Our Father" is the same for us; for God is our Father as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that Name is the security of our blessedness.

Ver. 7. How easy is conversion, when we are not converted to a strange God, but to our own God, who helps us towards Him! But it is just as certain that all who have departed from God need to return. Turn unto God! is the most natural, but also the most pressing cry. True conversion must be attested by its fruits. Men are converted truly to God, when they trust in Him constantly.

Lange: Faith, love, and hope must abide together.

[Matt. Henry: Let our eyes be ever towards the Lord, and let us preserve a holy security and serenity of mind under the protection of the divine favor, looking without anxiety for a dubious event, and by faith keeping our spirits sedate and even; and that is waiting on God as our God, in covenant, and this we must do continually. — M.]

Ver. 8. The chief distinction of the Canaanitish character is the earthly mind, which leads of necessity to unrighteous deeds. Avarice is a root of all evil, and a mother of unrighteousness.

[Fausset: How much deceit is practiced by so-called Christians of the trading world, who are "Christians" only in name! — M.]

Ver. 9. Starke: Those who infer the possession of divine favor from outward prosperity make a great mistake. Much deceit and injustice is done in trade and intercourse with men, and when God does not punish at once, every one supposes that he who practices them is not guilty.

[Fausset: None are more blind to their spiritual danger than those eager in pursuing gain. The conventional tricks of trade and the alleged difficulty of competing with others save by practicing the usual frauds, are made the excuses for usages, which, whatever else they gain, end in the eternal loss of the soul! In regard to spiritual riches the soul is never so poor as when satisfied with its own imaginary riches. — M.]

Ver. 10. Starke: We should diligently call to mind and never forget the benefits which God bestowed upon our forefathers.

[Pusey: The penitent sees in one glance how God has been *his* God from his birth until that hour, and how he had all along offended God. The Feast of Tabernacles typifies this our pilgrim state, the life of simple faith in God, for which God provides; poor in this world's goods, but rich in God. The Church militant dwells, as it were, in tabernacles; hereafter we hope to be received into everlasting habitations in the Church triumphant. — M.]

Ver. 13. A man may be chosen by God's grace, and an heir of God's promises, and yet may suffer distress and humiliation. In the fullest measure was this realized in the Son of God Himself. What else then can we expect?

II. *The Judgment of God's Anger.*

Chapter XIII.

1 When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling;[1]
He exalted himself in Israel,
Then he transgressed through Baal and died.
2 And now they continue to sin,
They made for themselves idols of their silver,
Images according to their understanding [as they pleased],
All of them the work of artificers;
To them men who sacrifice[2] are speaking (in prayer),
They kiss the calves.
3 Therefore will they be like the morning cloud,
And like the dew, which soon passes away,
Like chaff which is whirled[3] out of the threshing-floor,
And like smoke from a window.
4 And (yet) I am Jehovah, thy God,
From the land of Egypt,
And thou dost not know a God besides me,
And there is no Saviour except me.
5 I knew thee in the desert,
In the land of droughts.
6 According to their pasture [as they fed] they were satisfied,
They were satisfied, and their heart was uplifted,
Therefore they forgot me.
7 And (so) I became[4] as a lion to them,
And as a leopard I lurked in the path.
8 I will attack them like a bear[5] robbed of her whelps,
And rend the inclosure of their heart,
I will devour them then like a lioness;
The wild beast of the field shall rend them.
9 It has destroyed thee,[6] Israel,
That thou (hast been) against me, against thy Help.
10 Where[7] then is thy king,
And he (who) will help thee in all thy cities?
And thy judges[8] of whom thou saidst:
"Give me a king and princes?"
11 I give thee a king in my anger,
And will take him away in my wrath.
12 Ephraim's guilt is bound up,
His sin is treasured away.
13 The pains of a travailing woman shall come upon him:
(But) he is an unwise son;
Because at the (right) time[9] he would not enter the opening of the womb.
14 Should I redeem them from the hand of hell?
Should I free them from death?
Where are thy plagues, O death?
Where is thy destruction, O hell?
Repentance shall be hidden from my eyes.
15 For (though) among (his) brethren he may be fruitful,[10]
An east wind will come,
A breath of Jehovah rising from the desert,
And his spring shall dry up and his fountain be parched;
He [Assyria] shall plunder the treasure of all the costly vessels.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — רְתֵת, ἅπ. λεγ. = רֶטֶט [Jer. xlix. 24. Targ. רְתִיתָא. — M.]

[2 Ver. 2. — זֹבְחֵי אָדָם. This construction is to be explained on the principle laid down by Ewald, § 287 *g*, that the subordinate word in the construct may sometimes denote the individual or individuals of the class denoted by the principal word. For an example of the same construction in addition to the one given in the exposition, see Micah v. 4, נְסִיכֵי אָדָם, those of men that are anointed. — M.]

[3 Ver. 3. — יְסֹעֵר. See Green, § 92 *b*. — M.]

[4 Ver. 7. — וָאֱהִי. ו is inferential, Green, § 287, 1. — M.]

[5 Ver. 8. — דֹּב here means the female bear, and yet, being of the common gender, it may be joined with a part. masculine. Comp. cxliv. 14 for a parallel case. — M.]

[6 Ver. 9. — שִׁחֶתְךָ. We have here the third sing. Piel. There is no ground for assuming a substantive: destruction, as Henderson does. — M.]

7 Ver. 10. — אֱהִי. A particle of interrogation. It is dialectical, and occurs only here and in ver. 14. It is = אַיֵּה: where, and is strengthened by אֵפוֹא = *tandem*, ποτέ: when then?

[8 Ver. 10. — Supply אֱהִי before שֹׁפְטֶיךָ.

[9 Ver. 13. — עֵת must be taken here adverbially: at the (right) time. — M.]

[10 Ver. 15. — יַפְרִיא. A ἅπ. λεγ. The form פָּרָא is supposed, with probable correctness, to have been chosen instead of the usual פָּרָה, in order to conform to אֶפְרָאִים, of which it is the root. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **When Ephraim spoke**, etc. An allusion to the high respect paid to Israel. נָשָׂא is here intransitive [comp. Ps. lxxxix. 10; Nah. i. 5]. The reference is to the unrighteous desire for predominance cherished by Ephraim, which led at last to the schism from the House of David. But internal declension was immediately connected with this. The worship of Baal evidently began really with the calf-worship according to the view of the Prophet. He cannot allow it to be maintained that the latter was the worship of Jehovah. **And died**: They died spiritually, and then outward ruin comes also. [This view of the whole verse is approved by Henderson, Pusey, and most recent Expositors. — M.]

Ver. 2. All their former transgressions were continued. לָהֶם הֵם אֹמְרִים. This is difficult. זֹבְחֵי אָדָם is not = who sacrifice men, for human sacrifices were not offered in the calf-worship, but = those among men who sacrifice, according to the analogy of אֶבְיוֹנֵי אָדָם (Is. xxix. 19). Keil renders: of them they say (those of the men that sacrifice); they kiss the calves. But this is linguistically harsh, for "they kiss calves" would be *oratio obliqua*, and לָהֶם would mean: of them, namely, of the images. It is besides unnatural. To whom should the offerers "say" that they kiss the calves? They certainly perform such actions, and it is that is the conduct here rebuked, but their saying that they do so is a very remote idea. We are therefore obliged to take אֹמְרִים here absolutely as it is nowhere else employed = speak in prayer. This is just the thought that is suitable here. It had been previously said that these images are purely the work of men themselves, and yet — how cutting is the reproof! — they speak with these very works of their hands, they kiss them, as though they were flesh and blood.

Ver. 3. The punishment of this is swift destruction. As to the figures of the morning cloud and the early dew, see on ch. vi. 4. Here there are added other comparisons; the usual one of chaff, and, besides, that of smoke, which escaped by the windows since there were no chimneys.

Vers. 4, 5. As contrasted with Israel's idolatry Jehovah points again to what he had done for Israel long ago, at first with the same words as those employed in xii. 10, but afterwards more fully. **I knew thee**, with the accessory notions of love and compassion.

Ver. 6. The goodness of God is abused. **According to their pasture**, *i. e.*, in the land given them by God. The complaint rests upon Deut. viii. 11 ff. (comp. also xxxi. 20; xxxii. 15 ff.). That against which they were there warned, has been done.

Vers. 7, 8 therefore describe the punishment, in accordance with the figure of the pasture, in which Israel is the flock. The flock will be rent as by wild beasts (comp. also, v. 14). וָאֱהִי, and I became to them: the punishment had already begun and would be continued. **The inclosure of their heart** = their breast.

Ver. 9. **It has destroyed thee, O Israel, that thou wert against me, thy Help.** The second clause gives the cause of the first. בִּ is then to be taken in the sense of "against;" that thou against me, against thy help. According to the sequel the special reference is to the falling away from the House of David. [So Ewald, Keil, and most of the recent Continental Expositors agree in adopting the above explanation. Pusey and Noyes among the Anglo-Americans also prefer it. The others generally hold to the rendering of the E. V. The two chief objections against the latter view are that it demands a very roundabout rendering of שִׁחֶתְךָ, and that the second בְּ is most naturally to be taken in the same sense as the first, and therefore cannot be a *Beth essentiæ*. — M.]

Ver. 10. Israel had indeed a king, but not one who could help them, or defend their cities (against Assyria). **And thy judges**, probably = the princes who surround the king, "the ministers and coun-

sellors appointed by the king, who along with him exercise the highest judicial and executive authority." **Give me a king and princes**; not without allusion to the request of the people in the time of Samuel. On the case of Jeroboam, they repeated this ancient demand, at that time reproved by the Lord, in a still more sinful way.

Ver. 11. **I give thee a king in my anger**, not: I gave thee, because the expression is not to be limited to the elevation of Jeroboam, but refers generally to the kings of Israel. When they separated from the House of David and set up their own kings, God punished them, because in doing so "they forsook his worship, and gave themselves over to the power of their ungodly kings." **And will take him away.** This refers not merely to the dethronement of one king by another, but to the kingdom generally, which God would overthrow in his anger. The anger of God stands therefore at the beginning and at the end; giving kings and taking them away, are both an evidence of his displeasure.

Ver. 12 shows that the taking away of the king is inevitable: "*servata sunt ad vindictam omnia peccata eorum*" [Henderson: "The metaphors are here borrowed from the custom of tying up money in bags and depositing it in some secret place in order that it might be preserved. The certainty of punishment is the idea conveyed by them. Comp., for the former, Job xiv. 17; for the latter, Deut. xxxii. 34; Job xxi. 19." —M.]

Ver. 13 describes the punishment under the image of birth-pangs, in which, however, the pains of the mother are not so much thought of as the pressure which the child must suffer. And yet, though there is distress in child-birth, it does not tend to destruction, but to birth, to a new life. So also here. But death does follow if the child is not pressed out into the vagina in consequence of the labor, so as to come into the world alive: So is it with Israel. Under God's judgment they put off a return to Him, and will not be born again; that judgment must therefore be their destruction.

Ver. 14, according to the common view, introduces a promise without any preparation. Yet, though we cannot be surprised at the occurrence of sudden transition in our Prophet, a promise is evidently quite unsuitable. We would from the foregoing words rather expect a mention of the punishment reserved for their guilt, or a description of their pains. It would then be surprising if a promise were introduced; and the fact is that threatening is here unmistakably becoming stronger, until ch. xiv. 1. To be sure, if ver. 14 be regarded as a promise, ver. 15 must bear the same character, as they are connected by "for." But the change would be only the more violent, taking place in one and the same verse, and Keil only imports his notion into the passage, when he, for this reason, makes a distinction, and refers the beginning of the verse to those who walk in the footsteps of the faith, etc., of their progenitor, and the rest to Ephraim who had become changed into Canaan [a merchant]. But, besides, the second part of ver. 15 manifestly presupposes the beginning of the same verse, the image of the blasting wind presupposing that of the fruit-bearing, or the former is chosen with direct reference to the latter; the judgment is regarded as a devastation by scorching wind, because Israel is conceived of as a fruitful field. Under any other view members of a verse, which are connected in meaning, would be sundered. If therefore ver. 15 throughout is nothing but threatening, its beginning with "for" argues the same character for ver. 14. The beginning of ver. 14 is then to be explained as a question, though without the particle of interrogation: From the hand of hell should I deliver them? The second member contains an energetic negative response. Nay, even death and hell are summoned and charged to inflict and execute the judgment upon them. אֱהִי as in ver. 10 = where (see farther in the Doctrinal Section, No. 4).

נֹחַם: either repentance or compassion. The former is most suitable: it is not to be supposed that I repent of this threatening, that I recall it.

Ver. 15. כִּי הוּא וְג׳ alludes, with a play upon the name Ephraim (יַפְרִיא and אֶפְרָאִים), to their fruitfulness, in order to represent the judgment as a scorching wind destroying that fertility. **He will spoil.** "He," *i. e.*, the enemy presented under the image of the parching wind, Assyria. **The treasure of all precious vessels**, is to be sought especially in the chief city, Samaria, which is named immediately hereafter.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. Apostasy from Jehovah, which appears here also as Israel's chief sin, brought death upon them: they died (ver. 1). This conception sounds the depths of the subject. Outwardly regarded, they lived long, even after they gave themselves up to the worship of Baal (just like a fruitful tree, ver. 15), but in truth inwardly they were dead. For true life consists in union with Jehovah: idols can give no life. Israel owed its life to Jehovah alone (ver. 4). Therefore, ver. 9: "It has destroyed thee that thou hast been against me, thy help." What God had done for Israel from the beginning is here again (vers. 4, 5) made prominent, and the deliverance from Egypt with the leading through the Desert appear again as the fundamental act of mercy, for through them Israel became "living." Their present conduct towards God was a base and ungrateful ignoring of those deeds in the presumption of a prosperity which they owed to their God (ver. 6). A people who are inwardly dead cannot long outwardly survive. That God whom they had forgotten and from whom they had turned away, would and must at last show them that He had not forgotten them (ver. 12) by destroying them without sparing. This is indeed the only means of bringing them to life. For that and that alone is designed by God in their case; see ch. xiv. This must ever be kept in view if we are to understand the threatenings aright, which are reproduced here in a peculiarly intensified form: vers. 7, 8, vers. 12 to ch. xiv. 1. But how true and striking is such a description seen to be, when we remember that this divine judgment is executed by the invasion of a foreign conqueror! With what can his attack be better compared than with the attack of devouring beasts, or, after another image, with a scorching wind that destroys everything in its course? How often has that been repeated in the history of the nations!

2. The whole (temporal) kingdom was a divine system of punishment and chastening. At the request of the people, He granted them a king, but with the expression of his displeasure at their desire because it proceeded from unbelief and vanity, and with the declaration that they would lose their freedom by its realization. But, at the same time, this kingdom of Israel might become a blessing if

it with its king would obey God. Nay, God, by establishing the throne of David in Zion, even connected the most precious promises with this kingdom, if the king were entirely one with God and should gather about him a nation obedient to God. But the people with their king followed more and more decidedly a course opposed to God by separating (in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes) from the house with which God had connected his promises, and so forsaking the king which God had given them, they must therefore be punished by having this self-erected kingdom taken away, and the punishment is all the greater that they shall never return to a state of freedom, but must lie under the much viler bondage of foreign rulers until they return to the king whom God had promised to raise up from the House of David.

3. The passage in ver. 14 is and remains difficult, and, although in the light of the context we cannot regard it as containing a promise, yet the view which regards it as such is in so far to be respected as the beginning of the verse especially, taken by itself, makes it appear natural. For this reason, probably, the LXX. translate in this sense, and the Apostle Paul, freely following them, cites these words (in connection with Is. xxv. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 55), in the sense of a challenge indeed, but in the same with the implication that death and hell should reveal their impotence, and therefore in the sense of a promise. But this will not compel us to explain the words otherwise than as the context requires, and we find this in accord ith any but the simply mechanical theory of inspiration. But it is still to be kept in mind that in one passage the possibility of a redemption from death and hell is presupposed even if its accomplishment is refused by the threatening. But it corresponds with the character of the New Testament that it has changed the threatening into a promise. While the Old Testament summons death and the underworld to execute judgment upon their servants, the New Testament rather shows them conquered and powerless, so much so that they must even yield up the prey which they already have, and so far Paul had internal justification to convert the Old Testament threatening into a promise, or rather into a pæan of triumph, and thus in the Spirit chose the true course. For the view of ver. 14 as containing a promise, we may cite further the beautiful remarks of Rieger: "Outward ruin becomes to many a path upon which they rush suddenly down to death and hell, and with their hardened hearts they prefer to be lost beyond redemption in death and hell rather than turn to God with contrite hearts, and yield themselves up to trust in Him. Therefore God's promise comprehends the whole ruin, the whole abyss of destruction into which the sinner rushes, so as to subdue proud unbelief by the promised redemption from death and hell, and make men driven to extremity well disposed towards God. O, that all to whom sin has become their destruction would allow themselves to be rescued by this hand offered them at the brink of death and hell, especially as we can behold more fully in the New Testament the victory which God has given us through Christ Jesus, and thus more easily gain its consolation."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. GERLACH: Pride comes before a fall. See how the sins of pride and false worship lead to spiritual and eternal death! With sin there came not only guilt but also the seeds of death, and so the heart and life-blood are consumed. On the other hand, with the new righteousness comes new life into dead souls.

[FAUSSET: Sin separates from God, the true life of the soul. Let all professors of religion ever remember this, that sin, habitual or unatoned for, and spiritual life cannot coexist in the same individual (Rom. viii. 6). — M.]

Ver. 4. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* Since God has showered down upon us so many blessings from our youth up, and since all that we have we owe to his goodness, it is vile ingratitude to rely, not upon Him, but upon human power, false worship, and the like. We have only one God and Redeemer. Besides Him we must know no other.

[MATTHEW HENRY: It is a happy ignorance not to know that which we are not to meddle with. Whatever we take for our God we expect to have for our Saviour, that is, to make us happy here and hereafter. As where we have protection we owe allegiance, so where we have salvation, and hope for it, we owe adoration." — M.]

Ver. 6. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* So is it with the ungodly. They misuse God's blessings and become secure, forgetting the gracious Giver, when they should rather erect an imperishable monument to Him in their souls. See thou, too, O my soul! whether thou art thankful to thy Saviour, whether thou dost bring home to thyself rightly and constantly the blessings which God has given thee, both temporal and spiritual, whether thou dost praise and live for the gracious Giver with mouth and heart and a holy walk.

[PUSEY: They who follow God for Himself, things of this sort are not called their pasture, but the Word of God is their pasture, according to Deut. viii. 3. In like way, let all think themselves blamed, who attend the altar of Christ not for the love of the sacraments [ordinances] which they celebrate, but only to live of the altar. — M.]

Ver. 9. It is the conduct of men towards God which determines their woe or weal. God alone is our true Help; therefore everything that resists Him must be lost; and there is no greater folly than to rise up against Him.

PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* God is guilty of no man's destruction, but only man himself.

Ver. 11. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* It is a great calamity to a country when the Lord gives it a prince in his anger that he may be the instrument of his vengeance.

[FAUSSET: God often punishes men by giving them their wish. — M.]

Ver. 12. God can and would remit our sins; but He can also retain them, and must do so as long as we remain impenitent; and as long as God retains them all hope of being freed from them is vain.

Ver. 14. So far can the love of God be changed into wrath that He, to whom it were easy to save, does not do so, but delivers over to death and destruction, nay, even, as it were, invokes the powers of destruction to execute his wrath, without his repenting or recalling his purpose. Even in this God has assuredly purposes of salvation. He punishes so severely only to open the eyes, when and since all other means have failed. [See the Exegetical and Doctrinal Remarks. — M.]

Ver. 15. When God withdraws his hand all prosperity disappears, and that often suddenly, before men are aware.

[MATTHEW HENRY: See the folly of those that lay up their treasures on earth, that lay it up in

pleasant vessels, vessels of desire, so the word is, on which they set their affections, and in which they place their comfort and satisfaction.

PUSEY: Such are ungodly greatness and prosperity. While they are fairest in show their life-fountains are drying up — M.].

III. *Exhortation to Return: Promise of Complete Redemption.*

CHAPTER XIV.

1 Samaria will suffer punishment,[1]
Because she rebelled against her God;
They shall fall by the sword,
Their sucklings shall be dashed to pieces,
Their pregnant women[2] shall be cut open.

2 Return, O Israel, to Jehovah, thy God,
For thou hast fallen through thy transgression.
3 Take with you words
And return to the Lord and say unto Him:
"Forgive all (our) iniquity[3] and receive (what is) good [acceptable],
And we shall render unto thee our lips (as) oxen [as our sacrifices].
4 Assyria shall not help us,
We will not ride upon horses,
We will no more say: our God, to the work of our hands,
(O Thou) in whom the orphan finds pity:"
5 I will heal their backsliding;
I will love them readily,[4]
For my anger is turned away from them.
6 I will be as the dew to Israel:
He shall bloom as the lily,
And shall strike his roots like Lebanon![5]
7 His shoots shall go forth,
And his glory shall be like the olive,
And his fragrance like Lebanon!
8 Those that dwell under his shade shall revive [produce] corn once more.
And shall bloom as the vine,
His renown (shall be) like the wine of Lebanon.
9 O Ephraim, what have I to do any longer with idols?
I answer and regard [watch over] him.
I am like a green cypress;
With me is thy fruit found.

10 Who is wise, that he may understand these things?
Discerning, that he may know them?
For the ways of the Lord are direct,
And the righteous walk in them;
But transgressors stumble thereon.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — תֶּאְשַׁם. From the notion of suffering punishment is derived the signification: to be desolated, waste = שָׁמֵם. [The reverse would be the order if any connection between the verbs existed. But there is none whatever. The latter meaning in all likelihood arose from the similarity in form between the two words, the one form naturally suggesting the other. But it is not to be inferred from this that the words are cognate. The roots are not at all related, but belong to families essentially distinct. Fürst, however, holds to the affinity. But see the forms in Arabic and Ethiopic related to אשׁם, and compare the radically different notions which lie at the basis of their prevailing significations respectively. — M.]

2 Ver. 1. — הָרִיּוֹת = הָרִיֹּתָיו. The masc. verb. with a fem. substantive is anomalous. According to Ewald it is to be explained from the fact that the fem. terminations of the plur. imperf. are but seldom employed. [The suggestion of Henderson is worthy of consideration, that the anomaly was occasioned by the form of יְרֻטָּשׁוּ immediately preceding. — M.]

3 Ver. 3. — כָּל־תִּשָּׂא עָוֹן. כָּל precedes for the sake of emphasis, and becomes an adverbial notion [= take away our iniquity altogether.]

4 Ver. 5. — נְדָבָה is an adverbial accusative [spontaneously, voluntarily, readily].

5 Ver. 6. — Newcome prefers to read לְבֹנָה, as more consistent with the context. But this cannot be admitted though it was the one followed by the Targum. See the exposition for the propriety of the image. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Samaria shall make expiation**, etc. תֶּאְשַׁם, from אָשַׁם, to make atonement, to suffer punishment. [Rendered in E. V.: shall be desolate, comp. the remarks in the Text. and Gram. Section. — M.] It is unnecessary to join this verse to ch. xiii., although it is naturally connected with it. The foregoing threatenings converge here first into the prophecy "concerning the destruction of Samaria because of its apostasy from its God," and then upon this groundwork is based the exhortation to return, and the promise of renewed mercy conditioned upon repentance. [Henderson: "For the concluding portion of the verse, comp. 2 Kings viii. 12; xv. 16; Amos i. 13. That such cruelties were not unknown among other nations, see Iliad, vi. 58, and Horace, Carm. iv. Od. 6." — M.]

Ver. 2. עַד יְהוָה, even unto Jehovah [literally: until, as far as, *un*to Jehovah. — M.]

Ver. 3. **Take with you words**: They are not to come to Jehovah empty, but at the same time need take nothing more than words, no outward gifts. The words they are to use are now named, וְקַח טוֹב: and accept good, namely, what now follows: the sacrifices of the lips. [The true idea of the phrase seems to be: receive what is good, pleasing, acceptable. For this sense of טוֹב, comp. Num. xxiv. 1; Deut. vi. 18. I find the meaning of the passage admirably expressed by Ewald: "The people must first return to God's love. The Prophet does not merely exhort them to this course; he shows them also in what manner it should be made; how and in what spirit the penitent are again to draw near to God's favor; namely, not with outward, even though imposing sacrifices, with bulls, *e. g.*, but with words, with the lips, *i. e.*, with the living promises of the spirit that struggles after mercy and offers what is good." The English expositors have, for the most part, followed the rendering of E. V.: and receive us graciously. Horsley (who is strangely opposed by Henderson "on the ground of philology") and Pusey recognize and adopt the natural and true construction. — M.] Literally: and we will render as bullocks our lips, *i. e.*, we will offer to thee for our sins the confession of our guilt and the promise of our return instead of sacrificial oxen (comp. Ps. li. 17–19; lxix. 31 f.; cxvi. 17; cxli. 2).

Ver. 4 follows immediately with such a vow, no longer to rely upon Assyria, no longer upon warlike power (horses) generally, no longer to serve idols. אֲשֶׁר בְּךָ: Thou, through whom, etc. Reliance upon God's compassion is that upon which the whole prayer of penitence is based.

Ver. 5. The promise of mercy follows as an answer to such a prayer of penitence. **Heal their apostasy** = the calamities which it has entailed. נְדָבָה [spontaneously] expresses God's perfect readiness to bestow such love.

Vers. 6 ff. The effects of this love of the Lord are rich blessings upon Israel: Jehovah Himself will become to Israel like a refreshing dew, and the consequences of this would be that they should bloom and strike root and send forth branches, or that they should flourish and develop a vigorous life. **Like Lebanon**, not simply like the cedars, but like the mountain itself, rooted as deeply and firmly. **Like the olive** [ver. 7] with its evergreen leaves and rich fruitage. **His fragrance like Lebanon** with its cedars and aromatic shrubs.

Ver. 8. Here from Israel as a whole, compared to a tree, are distinguished the members of the people, as those who flourish vigorously beneath the shadow of the tree. יָשֻׁבוּ is to be joined with יְחַיּוּ in an adverbial sense = again. The latter word = live again, become fruitful. They themselves shall even become like a vine, producing wine as precious as that of Lebanon. **O Ephraim! what have I still to do with idols?** = I will have nothing more to do with idols, *i. e.*, "I have now no longer to plead with thee on account of idols, as during the whole course of this prophecy Jehovah's claims to honor as against idols have formed the predominant theme. This is all done away upon the ground on which this promise rests, that Israel has returned to the Lord" (Schmieder). **I have answered and will regard him** (Ephraim) = will concern myself, care for him. God lastly compares Himself to a green cypress. In Him the people are to find their fruit, *i. e.*, the fruit which shall nourish them. [The English expositors, generally, adopt the rendering of the E. V., chiefly because the words of the first line do not seem to them suitable as uttered by God. But if they are held to assert that God would not have anything more to do with idols, would not come any longer into competition with idols for the affections of the people and so be brought into connection with them, they are seen to be suitable, and just what would be expected at the close of this book. And it would be altogether unnatural to introduce Ephraim as uttering this single exclamation in the midst of an extended passage in which God is the speaker. Finally, it is a most arbitrary principle which would require the insertion of the supplied words, or of any other, in a sentence in which the sense would be complete without an ellipsis. Manger carries such an unwarranted license to an extreme when he supposes that the whole verse forms a sort of dialogue, thus: —

EPHRAIM: What have I more to do with idols?
GOD: I have answered him and will regard him.
EPHRAIM: I am like a green cypress.

GOD: From me is thy fruit found.

Upon this it is obvious to remark, that if the verse is a dialogue, and it were necessary to indicate who the speaker is in his first utterance, it would be just as necessary to give a similar intimation at the beginning of his next response. — M.]

Ver. 10. **Who is wise,** etc. An epilogue to the whole Prophetic Book. אֵלֶּה refers to all that precedes, to the chidings and threatenings concerning sin and idolatry. **For right are the ways of the Lord.** This the crowning declaration, comp. Deut. xxxii. 4. The ways which God is said to follow are straight, *i. e.*, direct, leading to the object. The righteous walk upon them, and are thereby righteous. But transgressors stumble thereon, *i. e.*, they deviate from them, and are thereby transgressors, and at the same time the consequences of such deviation are recorded: they fall into ruin.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. It is clearly manifest here that the severe judgments announced as impending upon the kingdom of Israel have not their object in themselves, but are only means to an end. The kingdom in its present form must assuredly be destroyed, for it is utterly corrupt. But this is not to be done because God has turned Himself away from his people or desired to do so, or because his love for them is extinguished, but only because it is the only means of making room for something new, for the regeneration of his people.

2. Repentance, a return to God who had been forsaken, is to be the fruit of these judgments (comp. ch. ii. 18, 19), because it was their only design to lead to repentance, to make its necessity clear to the hearts of the people, and to prepare them for it through the severity of the wrath of God which they experienced, through their condition as "orphans" (ver. 4). The essential element of such a return was the prayer for forgiveness of guilt, involving both confession of and sorrow for sin, and in connection therewith the vow of a change of life. Rieger: "When the sinner resolves to return unto the Lord, the Spirit of Grace makes his soul willing. I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord. O how good it is if only the sullen silence is broken and he begins to speak with God from a heart freed from deceit. The highest instance of the honor which he can give to God in sincerely returning to Him, is to reject all help in men which he had sought before, and all creaturely consolation, to sanctify God the Lord in his heart, and to seek mercy like a helpless orphan, as our Lord Jesus has shown us that we are all orphans, teaching us to seek our Father in Heaven, like orphans who have no father on earth."

3. It is significant how "words" are emphasized as an expression of such repentance, and as explained by the contrast to "sacrifices," literal offerings of animals, every external legal service. Such sacrifices are not needed; "words" are sufficient; these are the true sacrifices well pleasing to God; and yet they must be words that express a right state of mind within. (On the other hand it must be remembered that words are no guarantee of a freedom from outward lip-service.) It cannot be said with certainty from this brief remark, whether the Prophet contemplates the sacrifices as entirely done away, as in the expected time of the coming redemption. The main object is to speak of the return to God, and it is clear that he regards this as a going forth of the heart, which does not need the intervention of any sacrifice, and therefore as a prayerful and penitent approach to Him without the medium of an offering. The idea is certainly at once suggested that if mercy can be found without sacrifices, there is no need of them afterwards in the state of grace.

4. Such a return presupposes the restoration of God's favor, which is manifested by the promise of a condition of rich blessing. On this promise a restoration into their own country is not indicated as a special element, although it is evidently assumed, as exile from their country is to be regarded as the punishment that was decreed, according to the threatenings of chaps. ix.–xi. The promise in our chapter presents, so to speak, the positive side, after the negative has been shown. Punishment shall not merely be taken away; blessing shall be restored to them, through which alone a return to their country is to be gained. From the fact, however, that here at the close of the Book such a return is not promised, it is to be inferred that in the picture of the future redemption which the Prophet sketches, such return is not of itself the most important element, *i. e.*, the Prophecy looks beyond it and towards something greater connected with it, a complete manifestation of God's favor to his people, which finds its expression in a state of rich and wondrous blessedness. This we designate the Messianic character of the prophetic promise. It is therefore clear that we are not to seek the fulfillment of this promise in premessianic time; apart from the consideration that it did not then appear. The Messiah Himself, according to the statement of the promise, did not accomplish it as consisting in the glorious bloom and vigor of the people; nor will He do so, simply because He has already brought a still higher disclosure of God's mercy, and will yet introduce a more glorious display, in which the whole believing people of God will enjoy (outward and inward) blessedness, as the nation of Israel will no longer be the object of special favor.

5. The promise here made to the people of Israel, that of full bloom and prosperity, and vigor, through the influence of God's grace — still chiefly in a temporal sense, — shall be fulfilled for all believers as God's true people in a higher sense: they shall be perpetually bedewed with power from God. The favor of God is ever fresh and blooming for them, and they enjoy its fruits without intermission, as they themselves become like a living, firmly-rooted, wide-spreading, never-fading, sweet-smelling tree. All this has its beginning even now, as surely as the divine favor brought to us through Christ is a reality, but shall only find its complete perfection when the kingdom of God shall have attained its complete realization.

6. "It is the object of the Prophet Hosea and of all Prophecy, in the spirit of ver. 10, to alarm and to warn the apostate, to confirm and to comfort the converted, and to glorify the Lord" (Schmieder). Only the ways of the Lord are right. Then inevitable destruction must befall him who departs from them. True wisdom is to regard them, and all the prophetic Scriptures are like an uplifted finger, which warns against any departure from them, and at the same time like an outstretched finger which points to the way upon which the righteous must walk.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 2–9. FRANKE: He who would read what is sweet and agreeable, should read the close of all the Prophets. They are like a choir of singers, one singing one part, another another; but at last they all dwell upon one note. The glory of Christ's Church at last is the *finale*.

Ver. 2. This is the key-note of all Prophecy; it always comes back to this. This warning is the most needed and the weightiest of all. All God's judgments have this as their aim. They cry out earnestly: Return. O that we might hear! It is well to hear when God calls through his deeds; but it is better to hear his Words. "To thy God," not to a strange God, but to One from whom so much good has been experienced, and who remains, the God of mercy and our God, even when He must punish us. Return! (1) the object: to the Lord, thy God; (2) the reason: because thou hast fallen through thy iniquity.

[MATT. HENRY: Sin is a fall, and it concerns those who have fallen by sin to get up again by repentance.

FAUSSET: God assures us that He is the God of his people, and invites us not merely to return *towards*, but never to rest until we have reached even UP TO Himself — to be satisfied with nothing short of Himself. — M.]

Ver. 3. Words are nothing unless they come from the depths of the heart. But when they come from thence, as did the Publican's prayer, and David's psalm of confession, then, though seemingly slight and less than "sacrifices," they are in truth as great and naturally more than all merely outward offerings, since they are measured according to the disposition of the heart. All grief over sin avails nothing without the prayer for forgiveness addressed to God. Not repentance but forgiveness, gives rest and peace.

[PUSEY: What other good can we offer than detestation of our past sins with burning desire of holiness?

FAUSSET: What so cheap as words? And yet words such as God requires are not natural to fallen man. The Spirit of God alone can teach such words. In Gospel times we have no longer burdensome literal sacrifices to offer, but we have an offering continually to render which is more acceptable to Him (Ps. lxix. 30, 31), the thanksgivings of unfeigned "lips," sanctified through the offering of Christ once for all. — M.]

Ver. 4. God is gracious to orphans. O that all orphaned ones might turn to God's mercy!

[PUSEY: He is indeed fatherless who hath not God for his Father.

Ver. 5. PUSEY: Steadfastness to the end is the special gift of the Gospel. In healing that disease of unsteadfastness God heals all besides. — M.]

Ver. 6. STARKE: God alone can truly revive the heart. Let him who needs comfort and refreshing seek them in God.

PFAFF. *Bibelwerk:* See how believers bloom in their holiness, strike root, bring forth fruit, and diffuse fragrance all around! Art thou also such a fruitful tree displaying such vigor of spiritual life?

[FAUSSET: All that is beautiful, solid, harmonious, and enduring shall be found in harmonious unison in the "trees of righteousness," etc. (Is. lxi. 3).

PUSEY: Such reunion of qualities, being beyond nature, suggests the more, that that wherein they are all combined, the future Israel, the Church, shall flourish with graces that are beyond nature, in their manifoldness, completeness, unfadingness. — M.]

Ver. 9. O that God could speak thus of us, finding in us no idolatry, nor needing to plead with us any longer because of our idols! What better thing could we wish than that God would regard us in mercy? In Christ this is realized. In Him he is also as an evergreen tree of life to believers; his mercy never ceases, and from its fullness they may all receive grace for grace. He is for them an evergreen tree of life, but also one whose fruit never fails, and ever nourishes.

[MATT. HENRY: God will be to all true converts both a delight and a defense; under his protection and influence they shall both dwell in safety and dwell at ease. He will be either a sun and a shield, or a shade and a shield, as their case requires.

PUSEY: Created beauty must at best be but a faint image of the beauty of the soul in grace; for this is from the indwelling of God the Holy Ghost. — M.]

Ver. 10. God's ways are direct; we must therefore not follow roundabout or crooked courses, but go straight forward in faith and labor; a straight course makes the best runner. Righteousness brings a blessing; unfaithfulness a curse, remains the simple and infallible rule of living, attested by God's word, and confirmed by experience.

LUTHER: Let us thank the merciful Father of Jesus Christ, for these greatest gifts, that He has revealed to us these direct ways, and pray that He would guide by his Holy Spirit those that walk therein, and preserve us to eternity.

[MATT. HENRY: God's discovery of Himself, both in the judgments of his mouth, and the judgments of his hand, is to us according as we are affected by it. The same sun softens wax and hardens clay. But of all transgressors, those certainly have the most dangerous fatal falls that fall in the way of God, that split on the Rock of Ages, that suck poison out of the balm in Gilead. Let sinners in Zion be afraid of this.

PUSEY God reveals his ways to us not that we may know them only, but that we may do them. The life of grace is a life of progress. Every attribute or gift or revelation of God, which is full of comfort to the believer, becomes in turn an occasion of stumbling to the rebellious. With this the Prophet sums up all the teaching of the seventy years of his ministry. This is to us the end of all; this is thy choice, O Christian soul, to walk in God's ways, or to stumble at them. — M.]

THE

BOOK OF JOEL.

EXPOUNDED

BY

OTTO SCHMOLLER, Ph. D.,

URACH, WÜRTEMBERG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES AND A NEW VERSION OF THE HEBREW TEXT,

BY

JOHN FORSYTH, D. D., LL. D.,

CHAPLAIN AND PROFESSOR OF ETHICS AND LAW IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY, WEST POINT, N. Y.

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JOEL.

INTRODUCTION.

I. *The Person and Time of the Prophet.*

The name Joel, יוֹאֵל, *i. e.*, *Jehovah* is *God*, is one of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament, having been borne by many persons mentioned in sacred history. For this reason our Prophet, whose name is found only in the title of this book, is distinguished as "The son of Pethuel." This is the only direct notice of him, and all the other incidents of his personal history must be inferred from the book that bears his name. He certainly lived in the kingdom of Judah, for in the call to the people to meet in the temple for the purpose of humiliation and repentance, Zion, and Jerusalem, and Judah alone are mentioned, ii. 15, 23, 32; iii. 1, 6, 16, 18. Of these localities he speaks not in the tone of a stranger, but as one who was personally identified with them. He makes no allusion whatever to the state of things in the kingdom of Israel. It is, therefore, highly probable that he resided and prophesied not simply within the limits of the kingdom of Judah, but specially at Jerusalem. Again, the way in which he speaks of the temple, the sacrifices, and the priesthood, raises the presumption that he was himself a priest.

The Time in which he lived is nowhere expressly stated, and cannot be fixed with absolute certainty. But we may determine it approximately from the relation between him and Amos. The latter begins his prophecy (i. 2) by a quotation from Joel iii. 16, and there is also a close resemblance between Amos ix. 13 and Joel iii. 18. Hence it may be inferred that Amos had the prophecy of Joel before him when he wrote his own. Now the time when Amos flourished may be easily fixed by the inscription and by the contents of his book, namely, in the days of the Judaic King Uzziah, and of the Israelitic King Jeroboam II. Joel, therefore, cannot belong to a later period. The design of his prophecy, and the condition of things which it implies, warrant the inference that he lived at an earlier day. Ewald justly says, "A later prophet would not have been so deeply moved as Joel was, by the terrible visitation of locusts and drought, as to call for a solemn act of national repentance on this ground alone. He would rather have seized the opportunity to point out and impress upon the people their spiritual defects, and while exhorting them to repentance, he would have told them specially of the sins from which they should break off, and return to the Lord." In Joel's days there is no evidence of the general corruption of manners that obtained in the times of Amos and Hosea. He makes no marked reference to particular sins. He does not speak of idolatry; on the contrary, the worship of Jehovah seems to have been maintained in the temple, at least in comparative purity. Israel, indeed, is exhorted to repent, but is at the same time encouraged by precious promises. He does not exhibit the heathen nations as the instruments of God's judgments on his own people; on the contrary, he ever sides with the latter, and he predicts the evils that shall overtake the heathen for what they have done to Israel. He makes no allusion to Assyria. The captivity of Israel by that power was an event beyond the horizon of the prophet. This much then is certain: that as the worship of Jehovah was still kept up in his day, Joel could not have belonged to the times of Joram, nor Ahaziah, nor Athaliah. He must have lived before or after their day. We cannot, however, place him very long before these

kings, as this would not consist with the reference to the invasion of Judah by the adjacent nations (iii. 3-6), which implied a weakened condition of the kingdom, nor with his probable allusion to the pillaging of Jerusalem by the Philistines and the Arabians in the reign of Joram. Again, the revolt of Edom, which did not occur earlier than the time of Joram, must be taken into account. Nor must Joel be separated too far from the days of Amos. For as Amos speaks of drought and locusts as judgments which God was about to inflict, we may infer that he had in view the same calamities as those described by Joel. It is natural to suppose that they came upon the kingdom of Judah to which Joel belonged, and that of Israel, which was the special field of Amos. Again, Amos speaks of the Philistines, the Tyrians, and Edom (ch. i.), and of their hostility to Israel, in a strain very similar to that employed by Joel (ch. iii.). Both prophets charge them with the same sin, and denounce against them the same punishment. Their sin was that of capturing Israelites and selling them as slaves; and although Joel names the Grecians as guilty of this crime, and Amos the Edomites, yet it is plain that they both had in view the same events. On this ground, Bleek holds that Joel, though older than Amos, was his contemporary, and places him in the time of Uzziah. Others think that as he nowhere alludes to Syria, whose capital Damascus is named by Amos (i. 3), nor to the invasion of Israel by that power under Hazael, in the days of Joash, he must have flourished in the early part of that reign, between B. C. 870–850. Certainly if he lived in the time of Joash it must have been in the early part of his reign, while he was still under the healthful influence of Joïhada the high priest, for at a later day he introduced the worship of Baal. To this view Bleek objects that while Joel might have been expected to refer to the Syrian invasion if his book had been written very soon after that event, there would be no reason for naming it if he wrote it in the days of Uzziah, fifty years after it happened, since Syria was remote from Judah, and separated from it by the then existing kingdom of Israel. But to this it may be replied that Tyre and Sidon were also separated from Judah in the same way. Hence as both prophets refer to the same heathen nations, while Damascus is mentioned by Amos alone, this difference becomes all the more remarkable, and seems to warrant the inference that Joel could not have lived during the Syrian invasion. Though the events detailed by Joel, on account of which the nations concerned in them would be punished, must have been in the view of Amos, yet there must also have been other occurrences, such as the war with Syria, nearer to his time, and more immediately affecting the kingdom of Israel to which he belonged. Hence if Amos prophesied about B. C. 810, Joel must have done so about B. C. 850. But while Joel was older than Amos, it does not follow that he is the oldest of the prophets whose writings we possess. He has many points of contact with Obadiah (comp. Ob. 10, Joel iii. 19; Ob. 11, Joel iii. 3; Ob. 15, Joel i. 15, ii. 1, iii. 12, 17; Ob. 18, Joel iii. 8). It is a question which of these two prophets is the elder. It is not improbable, though by no means certain, that Joel had before him the book of Obadiah, when he wrote his prophecy. But we shall not pursue the discussion.

[Wünsche, the most recent expositor of this book,[1] fixes the time of Joel as somewhere between B. C. 860–850, and the grounds on which he bases his opinion are these:—

1. Joel charges the Philistines with having invaded Judah, captured the inhabitants, and sold them as slaves. Now according to 2 Chron. xxi. 10, this happened under Joram, B. C. 889–883. And they suffered the punishment predicted for their crime, under Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6. Hence Joel could not have written this book before B. C. 889, nor later than 732.

2. The Phœnicians, *i. e.*, those of Tyre and Sidon, who in the days of David and Solomon were the allies, had in later times become the enemies of Judah. They too had been guilty of selling Jewish prisoners to the Grecians. Joel predicts that they also shall be punished for this crime,—a prediction fulfilled in the time of Uzziah, B. C. 811–759. This proves that Joel must have prophesied before the days of Uzziah.

3. The Edomites (iii. 19), are ranked among the enemies of Judah. They came from the same stock as the Jews, and on account of their sin against their brethren, their country was to become a perpetual desolation. From 2 Kings viii. 20, comp. with 2 Chron. xxi. 8, we learn that they became independent of Judah in the time of Joram, B. C. 889–883. They were again subdued, and their capital city Petra captured, B. C. 838–811, though the southern and eastern parts of their territory were not conquered until the reign of Uzziah, about B. C. 830. The prophet must have exercised his ministry, therefore, prior to the latter date.

1 [*Die Weissagungen des Propheten Joel, übersetzt und erklärt*, von Dr. Aug. Wünsche, Leipzig, 1872. A very elaborate work.—J. F.]

4. The fact that no mention is made of the invasion by the Syrians of Damascus, proves that Joel was one of the early prophets. This occurred in the latter part of the reign of Joash, B. C. 850–840.

5. The high antiquity of Joel is proved by the fact that he makes no reference to the Assyrian invasion of the two Jewish kingdoms in B. C. 790. On the other hand, Amos clearly alludes to it (vi. 14).

6. Another proof is derived from the relation between Joel and Amos. The latter was certainly well acquainted with and used the writings of the former.

7. The mention of the Valley of Jehoshaphat is a circumstance leading to the same conclusion. It took this name from the memorable victory there gained over Moab and Ammon. The way in which Joel refers to it shows that this event must have been a comparatively recent one, and that the memory of it was still fresh.

On these grounds we conclude that in fixing the time of this prophet, we cannot take for our *terminus a quo* an earlier date than B. C. 890, nor for our *terminus ad quem* a later one than 840. It most probably falls between B. C. 860–850. Joel therefore is the oldest of the Minor Prophets. — F.]

Of the *Ministry* of our Prophet, *i. e.*, as to the way in which he exercised it, we know nothing beyond what may be gathered from this book. Whether he first appeared simply as a preacher, or worked at the same time in other ways, cannot be determined. From what we know respecting the other prophets, it is more than probable that his prophetic teachings were originally oral, but if so, they must have been soon reduced to writing in the form in which we now have them. That he exerted a commanding influence on the popular mind is clear from ch. ii. 18, especially if this verse be taken in a historical sense. But in any view of it the passage shows that the prophet was conscious of his power; for he not only exhorts the nation to repentance, but imperatively demands it, and he does so with the evident assurance that he will be obeyed. For this reason we are inclined to think that he belonged to the order of the priesthood, and that his exhortations were, in the first instance, addressed to his brethren in that office.

II. *Of the Book.*

There can be no question that the book bearing the name of Joel was written by himself. Not only is there no ground for doubt on this head, but all the positive evidence in the case is strongly on the same side; as, for example, the perfect unity that marks the book, one chapter fitting into another with the most complete exactness. Even if we admit, what some assert, that ch. ii. 10, etc., belongs to a later date than the other parts of the book, our remark holds good, for it is most closely connected with what precedes and follows it. Whether we have the discourses of the prophet precisely as they were delivered (supposing it to have been orally), or only the substance of them, is a point which cannot be determined, and is really one of no practical importance. Most probably we have them in the latter form, as the high finish and poetical diction of the book, specially in the first two chapters, suggest the idea of literary elaboration, rather than that of a simple reporting of oral discourses.

[Of the *Style* of the Prophet, the chief characteristic, says Dr. Pusey, is perhaps its simple vividness. Everything is set before us, as though we ourselves saw it. This is alike the character of the description of the desolation in the first chapter, the advance of the locusts in the second, or that more awful gathering in the valley of Jehoshaphat described in the third. The prophet adds detail to detail; each clear, brief, distinct, a picture in itself, yet adding to the effect of the whole. We can without an effort bring the whole of each picture before our eyes. Sometimes he uses the very briefest form of words, two words, in his own language, sufficing for each feature in his picture. One verse consists of five such pairs of words, i. 10. Then again the discourse flows on in a soft and gentle cadence, like one of those longer sweeps of an Æolian harp. This blending of energy and softness is perhaps one secret why the diction also of this prophet has been at all times so winning and so touching. Deep and full, he pours out the tide of his words with an unbroken smoothness, carries all along with him, yea, like those rivers of the new world, bears back the bitter restless billows which oppose him, a pure strong stream amid the endless heavings and tossings of the world. Poetic as Joel's language is, he does not much use distinct imagery. For his whole picture is one image. They are God's chastenings through inanimate nature, pic-

turing the worse chastenings through man. Full of sorrow himself, he summons all with him to repentance, priests and people, old and young, bride and bridegroom. The tenderness of his soul is evinced by his lingering over the desolation which he foresees. It is like one counting over, one by one, the losses he endures in the privations of others. Nature to him seemed to mourn; he had a fellow feeling of sympathy with the brute cattle which, in his ears, mourn so grievously; and if none else would mourn for their own sins, he would himself mourn to Him who is full of compassion and mercy. Amid a wonderful beauty of language he employs words not found elsewhere in the Holy Scripture. In one verse (i. 16), he has three such words. The extent to which the prophecies of Joel reappear in the later prophets has been exaggerated. The subjects of the prophecy recur; not, for the most part, in the form in which they were delivered. The great imagery of Joel is much more adopted and enforced in the New Testament than the Old, — of the locust, the outpouring of the Spirit, the harvest, the wine-treading, the wine-press. To this unknown Prophet, whom in his writings we cannot but love, but of whose history, condition, rank, parentage, birthplace, nothing is known, nothing beyond his name, save the name of an unknown father, of whom, moreover, God has allowed nothing to remain save these few chapters, — to him God reserved the prerogative, first to declare the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon all flesh, the perpetual abiding of the Church, the final struggle of good and evil, the last rebellion against God, and the Day of Judgment.

The tone of Joel's writings, says Wünsche, indicates deep religious feelings, heartfelt experience, and warm sympathy. His moral ideas are lofty and pure, and testify to the religious knowledge and the holy life of the prophet. His poetry is distinguished by the soaring flight of his imagination, the originality, beauty, and variety of his images and similes. The conceptions are simple enough, but they are at the same time bold and grand. The perfect order in which they are arranged, the even flow and well compacted structure of the discourse, are quite remarkable. In his energy, power, and dignity, Joel reminds us of Micah; in his vivacity and lifelike freshness he resembles Nahum; in his originality and directness, in the bold range, and sublime strain of his ideas, he falls but a little below Isaiah: in his enthusiastic zeal for true religion, and his clear, earnest, penetrating insight into the moral disorders of his times, he resembles Amos. Joel threatens and warns; he descends into the innermost recesses of human nature, and he drags into the light of day, corruption, falsehood, and lukewarmness in the worship of Jehovah. Of our Prophet, Umbreit finely says: The Prophetic mantle which enrobed his lofty form, was worthy of his majestic spirit; its color is indeed dark and solemn, like the day of the Lord which he predicts, yet we see sparkling upon it the stars of the eternal lights of love and grace. — F.]

The *Occasion* of this book was a terrible visitation of Judah by locusts and drought. The prophet describes the devastation produced, and viewing it as the beginning of a great judgment day of the Lord, he calls upon the priests to appoint a day for national humiliation and prayer. This must have been done, since he, by divine authority, promises the people the richest blessings for the present and the future, as well as complete deliverance from all their enemies.

The book consists of *two Parts*, which must be carefully distinguished. They are as follows: —

Part I. includes chaps. i.–ii. 17; Part II. extends from ii. 19 to the end of ch. iii. They are connected together by the historical statement (ii. 18, 19).

Part I. The plagues already named, are described as a divine judgment. The call to repentance.

Ch. i. The unprecedented plague of locusts and drought is described, and those on whom it fell are called upon to lament over the desolation of the land caused by it; one of the worst results of it being the necessity for suspending the daily sacrifices. For this reason the priests are required to mourn themselves, and to summon all the inhabitants of the land to join with them in their lamentation.

Ch. ii. This visitation is simply a token that a great judgment day of the Lord is coming. The army of locusts, of which a graphic picture is given, is the host of the Lord, sent to do his will (vers. 1–11). Still the threatened judgment may be averted by timely repentance (vers. 12–14). Hence the priests should appoint a day of humiliation and prayer, and should beseech the Lord to have mercy upon the nation as being his own people (vers. 14–17).

Part II. contains promises: (1) For the present (ii. 18–27). God will deliver his people

from the plague and amply repair the evil done by it, by new blessings, and so prove that Israel is his people. (2.) For the future still greater things are promised. The day of the Lord is surely coming, but to Israel it shall be a day of salvation, and a day of terror only to Israel's foes. This day shall be introduced by the outpouring of God's Spirit upon the whole people. There shall be at the same time terrible signs in the heavens and the earth, from which there is safety only in Zion. But there, all will be perfectly secure (ch. iii. 1–8). The day itself is described as one of deliverance for Israel, and of destruction for their enemies, *i. e.*, "the nations." These nations are reproached for their crimes against Israel, and shall be punished on account of them (vers. 9–16). Infliction of the punishment. The Lord assembles Israel and the nations, in the valley of Jehoshaphat. At first it seems as if the nations were on the point of storming the holy city, but then and there, amid terrible signs, they are annihilated by the Lord at one blow. The dawning of Israel's salvation described (vers. 17–20). Uninjured by their enemies, protected by their God, who dwells forever in the midst of them, his people enjoy the richest blessings.

What Joel says of the locusts is not to be taken simply as an allegory, nor as a merely figurative description of the hosts of war. Nor is the first chapter a prediction; on the contrary it describes his own experience.

Importance of this Book. We find that it was held in high consideration by the later prophets. We have already mentioned the use made of it by Amos. It is also quite plain that Isaiah used it (comp. Is. xiii. 3, 6, 8, 10, 13, and Joel, ii. 1–11; iii. 15, 16). That other later prophets had the book before them will be obvious to any one who examines a Bible with parallel references. Delitzsch, therefore, justly says, "Among the prophets who flourished from the time of Uzziah to that of Jeroboam, Joel unquestionably holds the position of a type or model, and after Amos, there is not one whose writings do not remind us of him." We may even claim for Joel (and Obadiah also if we regard him as one of the earlier prophets), a sort of fundamental significance for the whole series of later prophets, not only on account of his clear and precise prediction of the coming of the day of the Lord, but also because of the way in which he connects Israel with it. Even God's covenant people must look well to see how they stand, for in that day, repentance alone can help them. If this is wanting, if Israel departs from God, escape from the coming judgment will be impossible, — a truth which the later prophets exhibit with an ever-growing emphasis and distinctness. The prophecies of Joel are, it seems to me, fundamental in another sense, namely, in the promises they give respecting Israel's future. Though Israel must first suffer on account of their sins, yet the prophet anticipates with confidence the time when they shall return in penitence to God, and predicts that they shall win a glorious triumph, while all their enemies, *i. e.*, the world, shall be utterly destroyed. Thus Joel (uniting himself, as it were, with Obadiah in unfolding and confirming the prophetic promises on this head), fixes with an assured faith the position of Israel, as God's own people, and foretells their glorious victory over all their foes, though the latter may, for the present, bring upon them much shame and sorrow. What the eye sees cannot be an object of faith, which has to do with things for the time being invisible. Accordingly Joel has given a key-note (much more full than that of Obadiah's), which was repeated by the later prophets; he unfurled a standard, so to speak, which shall never cease to wave on high. The later prophets would witness the deep humiliation of God's people by the nations, *i. e.*, the world power; they would have to announce the total overthrow of the commonwealth of Israel, the annihilation of its political existence, as a well-deserved punishment for their sins. But notwithstanding this, all that Joel had promised would be realized; the day of the Lord was surely coming for the heathen, — a day of fearful recompense to them, but to his own people a day of deliverance and eternal salvation. So we find that in spite of the denunciations against the chosen people on account of their apostasy, in spite of the judgments to be inflicted upon them through the agency of the heathen, the faith and hope of the prophets in regard to the future of Israel are never shaken. They perpetually recur to the promise that the Lord will not cast off his people. A remnant shall survive. In this remnant Jehovah will be glorified, and will show that his ultimate design was not to destroy his people, but to bestow upon them fresh favors, yea far higher ones than their fathers enjoyed. This promise becomes more and more closely allied to the hope of a Messiah, and gives to it a more and more positive shape. This hope of a Messiah is the solid basis of all other hopes of Israel's future and glorious destiny. Joel, indeed, does not in express terms describe this Messianic foundation, as it may be called, but he has a general conception of it, and for this

reason we have said that his prophecy may properly be called a fundamental one, *i. e.*, with reference to those on the same subject, in later times.

III. *Literature of the Book* (exclusive of Commentaries on the Minor Prophets as a whole).

Sebast. Tuscani, *Erem. Augustin. Comment. in Joel*, Colon., 1556; *Joel cum Adnot et Versione trium Rabbin*, per Gilb. Genebrand, Paris, 1563; Eli Schadæus, *Synopsis Joel*, Argent, 1588; F. Bunny, *Enarratio in Joel*, Lond., 1588, 1595; J. Mathiæ, *Prælectiones in Joel*, Basil, 1590; S. Simonidis, *Comm. in Joel*, Cracov, 1593; Sol. Gesner, *Comm. in Joel*, Viteb., 1614; J. H. Ursinus, *Comm. in Joel*, Francov., 1641; Ed. Pocock, *Comm. in Proph. Joel*, Lips., 1695; Haseus, *Joel Illustrata*, Bremen, 1697; J. J. Schurrman, *Proph. Joel*, Wesel, 1700 (also Holland version, 1703); Sam. Chandler, *Paraphrase and Critical Comment. on Joel*, London, 1735; C. F. Bauer, *Introd. in Joel*, Wittemb. 1741; G. N. Richter, *in Joel*, Viteb., 1747; Baumgarten, *Auslegung des Joel*, Halle, 1756; P. Conz, *Dissert de Charact Poet Joels*, Tub., 1783; J. Buttner, *Joel olim Hebræus*, Coburg, 1784; J. R. Eckerman, *Joel metrisch übersetzt und erklärt*, Lubeck und Leipzig, 1786; Justi, *Joel übersetzt und erklärt*, Leipzig, 1792; A. Svanborg, *Joel Latine Versus, et Notis philol. illustrata*, Upsal, 1806; F. A. Holzhausen, *Comment.*, 1829; K. A. Credner, 1831; A. Wünsche, *Die Weissagungen des Propheten Joel, übersetzt und erklärt*, Leipzig, 1872. Among practical expositors, may be named, J. Diedrich, *der Proph. Joel, kurz erklärt*, Leipzig, 1861.

THE PROPHET JOEL.

PART FIRST.

THE JUDGMENT AND CALL TO REPENTANCE.

CHAPTERS I. 1–II. 17.

SECTION I.

Complaint of the Desolation of Judah by Locusts and Drought.

CHAPTER I.

1 The word of Jehovah which came to[1] Joel, the son of Pethuel.

2 Hear this, ye[2] old men,
And give ear[3] all ye inhabitants of the land!
Hath such[4] a thing been in your days,
Or even in the days of your fathers?

3 Tell it[5] to your children,
And your children to their children,
And their children to another generation.

4 What the palmer worm[6] hath left, the locust hath eaten,
And what the locust hath left, the beetle hath eaten,
And what the beetle hath left, the caterpillar hath eaten.

5 Awake[7] ye drunkards,[8] and weep,
And cry out[9] all ye drinkers of wine
On account of the new wine (or must),[10]
For it is cut off (removed) from your mouth.

6 For[11] a people[12] hath invaded[13] my land,[14]
Mighty and numberless;
Their teeth are the teeth of a lion,
And they have the jaw teeth of a lioness.

7 They have laid waste my vine,[15]
And barked (or broken) my fig trees;
They have made it quite bare,[16] and cast it away;
Its branches are made white.

8 Lament[17] like a bride[18]
Girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.

9 Cut off is the meat offering and the drink offering from the house of Jehovah;
The priests mourn
The ministers[19] of Jehovah.

10 The field is wasted,[20]
The land mourneth,[21]
For the corn is destroyed,
The new wine is dried up,
The oil[22] fails.

11 Be ashamed ye husbandmen,
Howl ye vine-dressers,

For the wheat and for the barley[23];
Because the harvest of the field hath perished.

12 The vine is dried up,
And the fig tree faileth,
The pomegranate, also the palm, and the apple tree (quince),
All the trees of the field are withered,
So that joy is dried up[24] from the sons of men.

13 Gird yourselves and lament, ye priests,
Cry out ye ministers of the altar;
Come, lie all night in sackcloth
Ye ministers of my God,
For the meat offering and the drink offering
Are withheld from the house of your God.

14 Sanctify a fast,
Appoint a solemn assembly,
Gather the elders,
And all the inhabitants of the land
In the house of Jehovah your God;
And cry unto Jehovah.

15 Alas for the day!
Because the day of Jehovah is at hand;
It will come like[25] a tempest from the Almighty (Shaddai).[26]

16 Is not the food cut off before our eyes?
Joy and gladness from the house of our God?

17 The grains[27] (seeds) are rotten[27] under their clods,[27]
The garners are destroyed,
The barns[27] are broken down,
Because the corn is withered.

18 How the beasts groan!
The herds of cattle are perplexed,
Because they have no pasture;
Even the flocks of sheep perish.

19 Unto Thee, O Jehovah, will I cry,
For the fire hath devoured all the pastures of the plain,
And the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.

20 Even[28] the beasts of the field[29] cry nnto Thee
For the streams of water are dried up,
And the fire hath devoured the pastures of the plain (wilderness).

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — The preposition אֶל indicates direction, and like the Arab. ال includes ordinarily the *terminus ad quem*. Sept. ὅς ἐγενηθη προς Ἰωηλ.

2 Ver. 2. — הַזְּקֵנִים. The Heb., unlike the Arab., has no proper vocative, and hence the simple noun with or with out the article takes its place.

3 Ver. 2. — הַאֲזִינוּ, denom. verb from אֹזֶן: it is stronger than שָׁמַע, but is only used in poetry.

4 Ver. 2. — The dagesh in the second זֹּאת, is the *dag. forte conj*.

5 Ver. 3. — עָלֶיהָ. The fem. suffix, which according to a peculiar Heb. idiom stands for the neut., has for its antecedent זֹאת. The prep. עַל denotes the object of the discourse; it is used like the Lat. *super*, and Gr. ὑπέρ.

6 Ver. 4. — There is little difference of opinion in regard to the etymology of the names of the insects mentioned in this verse. — גָּזָם from the same root = to cut off. אַרְבֶּה, the most common name for locust, from רָבָה, to multiply. יֶלֶק from the same root, to lick up. חָסִיל from חסל, to consume. Expositors are, however, very much divided as to whether these terms are names of the locust at different stages of its growth, or of different species of insect. Bp. Newcome renders them, the grasshopper; the locust, the devouring locust; the consuming locust. Hitzig, Keil, and others regard them as simply poetical epithets of one and the same species of locust. It is hardly possible to give their exact equivalents in English.

7 Ver. 5. — הָקִיצוּ from קוּץ, to cut off, to separate, then to arouse, or awaken; the opposite of the onomatopoetic word רָדַם to snore, to sleep heavily.

8 Ver. 5. — שִׁכּוֹרִים, from שֵׁכָר, a strong drink made of honey, raisins, dates, and other fruits. Hence the word = notorious drunkards.

9 Ver. 5. — וְהֵילִילוּ, from the onomatopoetic יָלַל, to howl, complain.

10 Ver. 5. — עָסִיס is the fresh sweet juice of the grape, and other kinds of fruit, as the pomegranate, Song of Sol. viii. 3, and is to be distinguished from תִּירוֹשׁ, new wine, strictly so called. The former must have been a favorite drink of the old Hebrews.

11 Ver. 6. — כִּי makes the connection between this and the preceding verse.

12 Ver. 6. — גּוֹי denotes a heathen, hostile people, and differs from עַם, though the distinction between the two words is not always observed. See Text. notes on Obadiah, ver. 1.

13 Ver. 6. — עָלָה עַל, lit. gone up, upon, perhaps with reference to the fact that Palestine is higher than the countries around it; but the word is often used in the more general sense: to approach, to enter, etc., where the region is a level one.

14 Ver. 6. — "My land," אַרְצִי, *i. e.*, not the land of Jehovah, nor simply the native land of Joel, but the land with which he was allied as the prophet of the Lord.

15 Ver. 7. — גַּפְנִי, "my vine," — not the vine of the Lord, but of the Prophet speaking in his name

16 Ver. 7. — חָשֹׂף lit., "peeling it have peeled it," *i. e.*, completely.

17 Ver. 8. — אֱלִי, *imper. fem.* of אָלָה, and ἅπ. λεγ., like the Chald. and Syr. ܐܠܐ. The more usual form is הֵילִיל. Many expositors, without reason, take it as a *denom.* from אֵל, God.

18 Ver. 8. — The proper Heb. word for virgin is עַלְמָה The word here used denotes a bride, *i. e.*, a young woman espoused. See Is. vii. 14; Matt. i. 23.

19 Ver 9. — מְשָׁרְתֵי. Ministers, from שָׁרַת, to serve. It denotes free and honorable service, *e. g.*, of the temple, in contrast with עָבַד which denotes the enforced service of slaves.

20 Ver. 10. — שֻׁדַּד שָׂדֶה. A paronomasia. The root שָׁדַד has in *Kal* first the intrans. sense to be strong, next the trans. sense, to use strength, *i. e.*, to waste, to desolate. שָׂדֶה denotes specially wheat or barley fields, then woodland, &c. is where cattle fodder; אֲדָמָה, farmland generally.

21 Ver. 10. — אָבְלָה, the Sept. and Arab. versions take this as an *imper.*, and render it "Mourn! O land."

22 Ver. 10. — יִצְהָר, from the root יָהַר, to be clear, *i. e.*, the oil newly pressed and clarified; as distinguished from שֶׁמֶן, fat.

23 Ver. 11. — עַל־חִטָּה. The prep. עַל, as in vers. 5, 7, marks the cause. חִטָּה and שְׂעוֹרָה are the two kinds of דָּגָן: the one kind of grain being used as food by men, the other chiefly by cattle, though the very poor used both

24 Ver. 12. — כִּי־הֹבִישׁ. We have here what is called *constructio pregnans* = שָׂשׂוֹן הֹבִישׁ וּבָרַח, joy has withered and fled away.

25 Ver. 15 — כְּשֹׁד. The expression is regarded by some as a sort of proverbial one. כ is not pleonastic, nor the so-called כ *veritatis*, but indicates likeness in quality or degree.

26 Ver. 15. — "From Shaddai — the Almighty." The Rabbins, Raschi, Abarbanel, and Maimonides see in this name a profound mystery, because it is a noun compounded of the *insep pronoun*, שֶׁ, with *pattach notat.* and דַּי, or דָּיַי to hold. The rendering of the Sept., καὶ ως ταλαιπωρία εκ ταλαιπωρίας ἥξει, is wholly inadmissible.

27 Ver. 17. — The three ἅπαξ λεγομ. words in this verse, render it both as to etymology and grammar, one of the most difficult in the whole book. עָבְשׁוּ, according to Aben Ezra and Kimchi, means "rotted;" "perished," Newcome; "dried up," Pusey, Wünsche. Some light is cast on the sense of פְּרֻדוֹת, by the Syr. ܦܪܕܐ, seed, corn and the Chald. פַּרְדָּא, grain. In form the word is the Paûl participle of פָּרַד. The third word, מֶגְרְפוֹת, is probably from the root גָּרַף — found only in Judg. v. 21, — which in all the dialects has the sense of to bear or carry away The Arab. جرف, denotes the breaking up of the soil by the plough. מֶגְרָפָה, therefore, may be a lump of soil, a clod, such as is thrown up by the plough. So the old Jewish expositors have understood it. In מַמְּגֻרוֹת we have another ἅπαξ λεγ. — yet there can be little doubt as to its meaning. The מ local is prefixed. Newcome renders it "store-houses." Tregelles, "granaries, or cells for keeping grain."

28 Ver. 20. — גַּם here as in ver. 13, marks an increase of the general calamity.

29 Ver. 20. — The construction of the *fem sing.* with the plur. noun is common in poetry, and is proper here because בְּהֵמוֹת is used in a collective sense. This term denotes domestic cattle. — F.]

EXEGETICAL.

Vers. 2–4. (**Hear this ye old men,—) the caterpillar hath eaten.** A call is made upon the inhabitants of Judah, and especially the old men, to testify that an unheard-of thing had happened,—an event to be told to their posterity, namely, the complete desolation of the land by successive swarms of locusts.

Ver. 2. (**Old men.**) They are named because their memory goes back the farthest. The calamity might well be deemed extraordinary if they could recall nothing like it. **Inhabitants of the land,** *i. e.*, of Judah, as is evident from what follows ver. 14, ii. 1. זֹאת refers to what is stated in ver. 4. In vers. 2, 3 there is an allusion to Exod. x. 2–6, where the plague of locusts in Egypt is spoken of.

Ver. 4. Swarms of locusts come, each one devouring what its predecessor had left. This, however, is not described in a dry, prosaic way. As the locusts appear four times, they bear four distinct names. Their proper name is אַרְבֶּה, the others are poetic ones. These names are not used simply to denote the changes which the locusts undergo, nor their invasion of the land during successive years, as this would not consist with the statement that what one kind had left, another had eaten. The preterite אָכַל is to be taken in its proper sense. The whole chapter speaks of something that has actually happened. The desolation is described in detail, one feature of it after another being depicted in such a way as to arouse those affected by it to earnest prayer.

Verses 5–7. **Awake ye drunkards. — Its branches are made white.** The drunkards are called upon to mourn, to show poetically how complete is the desolation of the vineyards. At the same time, this is to be regarded as a punishment for the sins of the people, who are summoned to repent, though this last idea is not yet explicitly expressed.

Ver. 6. The locusts are represented under the figure of a hostile army. They are not to be regarded as a type of such an army, as if the passage was simply allegorical. Yet the idea of enmity to Israel implied in the word גּוֹי—a heathen people,—must not be lost sight of, for these locusts actually ravage the land of Israel. Hence there is no ground for taking עָלָה otherwise than as a preterite, nearly in the sense of a future, as predicting something to come. אַרְצִי is the land of the prophet as speaking in the name of the people. Jehovah himself does not speak directly, comp. v. 13. The arms of these invaders are their teeth, which grind like those of a lion. The jaw-teeth of the lioness protecting or avenging her young are added by way of climax.

Ver. 7. **The vine and fig tree.** These are added because they are among the most valuable of fruit trees, comp. Hos. ii. 14. לִקְצָפָה is properly that which is broken off, *i. e.*, a fragment of wood, splinter, chip. חָשְׂפָהּ, made bare, by barking or paring, so as to peel off. The bark is thrown away; and the whole vine is made white or blanched by the barking of it.

Vers. 8–10. (**Lament like a bride,—the oil fails.**) The lamentation of the drunkards is simply a prelude to what follows. It would be a mistake to suppose that sensual pleasures and enjoyments alone are meant. The thing at stake was so much greater than these, that the whole land had cause to mourn.

Ver. 8. Judah is here regarded as a wife, and hence the fitness of comparing this lamentation to that of a young bride mourning the husband of her youth. Certainly no judgment could be more severe than one that made it impossible to present "the meat and drink offerings." Hence the priests had reason to mourn; and Judah, in danger of losing the visible emblems of the presence of his God, is fitly compared to the young wife who had lost her husband. These offerings could not be presented because everything was destroyed. [The corn, wine, and oil were essential ingredients of these offerings, and every sacrifice would be imperfect without them. The locusts and the drought combined must also have caused a great dearth of the animals used in sacrifice. — F.]

Vers. 11–12. **Be ashamed, ye husbandmen,—from the sons of men.** The husbandmen and vine-dressers are next addressed. The worst feature of the desolation, already mentioned, is not again noticed until we come to ver. 13. In ver. 11, הֹבִישׁוּ, הֵילִילוּ are imperfects. הֹבִישׁ, from בּוֹשׁ (perhaps to distinguish it from הוֹבִישׁ the Hiphil of יָבֵשׁ, here without the ו which precedes and follows it), to be ashamed, to grow pale. Going into their fields and finding nothing there, they are ashamed.

Ver. 12 adds the reason for their lamentation. Besides the vine and the fig, other noble trees are mentioned which may have been under the special care of the vine-dresser; as well as the trees of the field generally. הֹבִישׁ שָׂשׂוֹן here also the Hiph. of בּוֹשׁ, to grow paler. Joy becomes, as it were, ashamed; she withdraws herself, and is no more seen.

Vers. 13–17. **Gird yourselves and lament ye Priests,—the corn is withered.** The discourse returns to what had been complained of in ver. 9, as the worst feature of the calamity, namely, the inability to offer sacrifices. Here (ver. 13) the priests are again called upon to lament the want of materials for the temple service. "*Gird yourselves,*" *i. e.*, with sackcloth or hair-cloth. "**Pass the night,**" *i. e.*, even in the night-time their lamentations on this account should continue. [They should weep between the court and the altar. See 1 Kings xxi. 27. There was nothing strange in this direction, for there was no intermission in the temple service by day or night. See Ps. cxxxiv. 1.—F.] "**Ministers of my God,**" the God whose prophet I am. [The suffix of the first person shows that the prophet, on the one hand, stood apart from the priests, and on the other, stood in a very near relation to God as his organ, and therefore elevated far above all other ranks and conditions of men.—Wünsche.[1] F.]

1 [Wünsche thinks that this circumstance shows that Joel could not have belonged to the priestly order. But this would be overstraining the sense of "my." — F.]

The phrase "your God," is immediately afterward used, and repeated in ver. 14, hence it must not be supposed that the prophet intended, or was obliged to separate himself wholly from the priests. There must be fasting as well as lamentation. This was to be observed not by the priests alone: on the contrary, the whole people must be assembled in the temple, and there in the midst of these masses the priests should cry unto the Lord. "**Sanctify a fast,**" because fasting was held to be, in the popular estimation, a holy, religious service. קִרְאוּ עֲצָרָה. The word עֲצָרָה ordinarily denotes a religious assembly, one to observe a great festival. Fürst thinks that it comes from עָצַר, to fix, to settle, *i. e.*, a fixed time,[1] hence to proclaim a fast day. The "**old men,**" — not the elders in the official sense of the term, as one might perhaps infer from the E. V. — who had been called upon (ver. 2) to testify that no such calamity had ever before happened, must be present in this assembly, as well as those who are to hear their testimony. זָעַק, to cry out as an expression of want, or distress. The substance of this "cry," or complaint, is presented in the verses that immediately follow. This complaint probably extends as far as ver. 17, in which the desolation of the land is set forth as the ground of the lamentation. Ver. 18 seems to begin a new section, in which the cries of the lower animals are represented as mingled with the complaints of men.

Ver. 15. **Alas for the day,** *i. e.*, the present time of desolation. This cry of distress is caused by the nearness of the day of the Lord. The character of this day may be learned from its results. It is close at hand; it is coming as a desolating scourge from the Almighty, and its effect will be such as to show that it could come only from Him. That this terrible state of things had already begun is evident from ver. 16. The meat is cut off; the voice of joy and gladness is no longer heard in the temple. Why? Because it is not possible to present there the usual thank-offerings. Besides the invasion of the locusts which had eaten up every green thing, there was an unusual drought (ver. 18) which had greatly intensified the calamity that had befallen Judah. In consequence of these things the granaries were empty, the barns had gone to ruin, for the corn had failed. The question arises, how is the passage from ver. 13 and onwards to be viewed. It is commonly taken to be a new section, the subject of which is the call to repentance. Keil thus explains its connection with the preceding context: "Lamentation and mourning alone will not bring release from the calamity: with these must be conjoined repentance and prayer to Jehovah, who can avert every evil." But though this view seems to be favored by vers. 14, 15, it really mistakes the prophet's train of thought. The call to repentance does not come formally into view until ch. ii. 12, though the way had been prepared for it, ii. 1. Now the description of the day of the Lord in ii. 2 has a relation to what is said in i. 15, so that the call to repentance may be said to have its root and nothing more, in this earlier section. The special design of ch. i. is to lay a foundation for what is to follow, by exhibiting the magnitude of Judah's distress, and the special reason for repentance. The intensity of the mourning showed the magnitude of the judgment. The priests (ver. 13) and the people at large (ver. 15) are alike called upon to recognize the judgment, and to return to God who had sent it. This passage and ch. ii. 15 seem to be exactly alike in purport, but there are differences between them which should not be overlooked. They differ in regard to the motive and the object of the proposed fasting and humiliation. In ch. ii. 15 the priests are charged to call a solemn assembly, because in this way they might hope for God's mercy. In ch. i. 14 the ground of lamentation is the suspension of sacrifices, which not only affected the public worship of God in the temple as conducted by the priesthood, but also the immediate interests of the people themselves. They also differ in the object proposed. In ch. ii. 15 the priests in the people's name and behalf beseech the mercy of the Lord. In vers. 14, 15 they cry to Him, "**Alas.**" They bring their complaint before the Lord, because this great calamity bears upon their relation to Him as his ministers, depriving them of the means for carrying on divine service, and hence they cry out, "the day of the Lord is near." So thorough is the desolation that one may well say "the day of the Lord is at hand." Things have this look. But as yet there is no word about repentance, confession of sin, and return to God. The calamity, in its unequaled magnitude, and far-reaching effects, just now fills the prophet's mind. He naturally regards it as coming from God's hand, but he here says nothing about the cause of it. The reason for deeming it a divine infliction is only implied in the connection between the devastation and what the day of the Lord would bring.

Vers. 17, 18 show that the prophet is not yet exhorting the people, but is still describing the great calamity. It would be strange, therefore, for him to introduce in ver. 13 a topic so entirely new, as repentance. Nor do we find in these verses the proper motives for such an exercise. Logically, then, these two passages are quite distinct, the one being a call to lamentation, and the other a call to repentance. When the prophet, in i. 14 and ii. 15, exhorts the priests to appoint a fast and call a solemn assembly, he does not mean that this should be done twice, at two different times. The one call is simply a repetition of the other, but in a different sense. He wishes the people to fast, and to meet in the temple, to mourn there with the priests, and that they should also manifest their penitence by prayer for mercy offered by the priests as their representatives.

Vers. 18–20. **How do the beasts groan, — the pastures of the wilderness.** The beasts of the field must suffer equally with men. This fact is used to illustrate the magnitude of the calamity. But as these dumb animals cannot describe their sufferings, the prophet himself becomes their interpreter, and as if sharing their distress, exclaims, **To Thee, O Jehovah, do I cry** — for help. That this appeal is in the name of the beasts of the field is evident from ver. 19. **The flame, the fire,** vers. 19, 20 = the fierce heats that produced the drought. **The beasts** include domestic and wild animals.

THEOLOGICAL.

1. We may here discuss the question whether the visitation of the locusts is to be regarded as an allegorical prediction of an invasion of the land by a hostile people, as most of the older expositors,

1 [The etymology of the word is right, but the sense which Furst suggests is an arbitrary one, and does not accord with its evident meaning in the many passages in which it occurs. It has the same sense here as in Lev. xxiii. 36; Num. xxix. 35; Deut. xvi. 8; 2 Chron. vii. 9; Neh. viii. 18. — F.]

and more recently Hengstenberg and Havernick take it to be. They think that the prophecy of the desolation of the land begins in chap. i. If this be so, as there is no formal mention of the future, we must suppose that the prophet sees the approach of the calamity so vividly, that he pictures the future as a present reality. While this view may be admissible, it is not natural. On its face, the text describes not a future, but a present fact, and there is no exegetical necessity for assigning to it any other sense. We may also remark that the call to the old men to testify whether such a thing had happened in their day, and to the people generally to transmit the account of it to their children, would have no significance, if the event were a future one. Chap. i. certainly describes a devastation that had actually happened, and as no foreign foe had as yet invaded the land, it must have been caused by locusts and drought. It needs no proof that the word "people" (ver. 6) does not necessarily denote a real nation. Again, the devastation caused by locusts would be an inadequate type of an invasion of the land, since one of the essential features of the latter would be wanting, namely, the shedding of blood. The picture of the calamity in no way suggests the terrors caused by an inroad of foreign foes. The chapter simply treats of the damage done to the products of the earth, and the complaints of men in consequence of it. — But as regards chap. ii., the question whether the visitation of locusts is to be taken in an allegorical sense, is not so easily settled. Here the coming of "the day of the Lord" is for the first time distinctly announced, and in this connection there is a renewed mention of the destruction caused by locusts and drought. That this latter event should be made the theme of a prophetic discourse, is no way surprising, because Holy Scripture teaches us that all public calamities are divine dispensations designed to awaken men to a sense of their sins, and to bring them to repentance. What more natural, then, than that the prophets should, in God's name, threaten such calamities, and when they did come, interpret and apply them so as to arouse the people to penitence, so that they might escape still heavier judgments? A clear illustration of this is found in Amos vi. 6, and as he closely follows Joel, we may regard it as settled that the latter prophet had these calamities before his mind. But the prophet is a poet as well as a preacher of repentance; and so he presents a most vivid poetic picture of the great misfortune which had befallen Judah. In its surpassing magnitude, God's chastising hand was all the more manifestly displayed, and his voice was all the more distinctly heard calling his people to repent.

2. The memory of extraordinary events should be preserved in the popular mind. They thus become a tradition, or a history. Thus only can there be a continuous life in the case of individuals, of families, and of nations. This basis of history, namely, the remembrance of the experience of former generations, in the case of Israel is essentially a religious one. Here, events are manifestations of God, — of his mercy, or his judgment. As such they should never be forgotten, in order that the revelation of God to the consciousness of a nation may be maintained in an ever-living freshness.

3. Terrible as is the scourge which strikes at the means of subsistence in a land, in the prophet's eye this is not its worst result. In this case, for example, the greatest evil produced by it was the loss of the sacrifices in the house of God. The Temple was the visible sign and pledge of God's dwelling in the midst of Israel as his people. But it was such only while divine worship was kept up in it, according to the due order, by the priests as the representatives of the people. The daily morning and evening sacrifice formed an essential part of this service; and on its continuance depended the continuance of God's covenant relation to his people [*i. e.*, not really, but visibly. — F.]. The suspension of the one suspended the other. Hence no greater misfortune could happen to Israel than the inability, caused by famine, to supply the Temple with the materials for these sacrifices. Joel, realizing fully the necessity of these offerings for the purpose before named, turns to the priests, here and in chap. ii., entreating them to call upon God themselves and to endeavor to bring the people to repentance. Such, in any case, was their present duty. How it might be in the future will be disclosed in chap. iii. Meanwhile it is manifest that no merely formal service would meet the exigency. Only true repentance would avail.

HOMILETICAL.

Vers. 1–2. [Henry: The greatness of the judgment is expressed here in two things: (1.) It was such as could not be paralleled in the ages that were past; in history, or the memory of any living. Those that outdo their predecessors in sin, may justly expect to fall under greater and sorer judgments than any of their predecessors knew. (2.) It was such as would not be forgotten in the ages to come. We ought to transmit to posterity the memorial of God's judgments as well as of his mercies. — F.]

Ver. 3. How necessary it is that our children should be taught the will of God, and what his purpose is when He chastises us, so that the fear of his holy name may be deepened in our hearts.

Ver 4. Here we learn the omnipotence of God, and how vainly human power is arrayed against Him, since He can employ the smallest and meanest insect to do his will.

Ver. 5. Ye drunkards who consume God's kindly gifts in intemperance and sin, know that your sin carries a curse with it, and that God can easily cut off the wine from your mouths, and punish you with years of famine.

[Pusey: All sin stupefies the sinner. All intoxicate the mind, bribe and pervert the judgment, dull the conscience, blind the soul, and make it insensible to its own ills. God arouses those who will be aroused by withdrawing from them the pleasures wherein they offended Him. Weeping for things temporal may awaken the fear of losing things eternal. — F.]

Vers. 6–8. The Christian Church is God's vineyard. If at any time it yields not good fruit, but only wild grapes, it shall be laid waste.

[Robinson: Prevailing sins are often visited with corresponding judgments. The Lord in his righteous dealings withholds those gifts of his providence which have been abused. He takes from an ungodly people the means of gratifying their lusts, and leads them to repentance by afflictions which are not capriciously ordered, but with exactest wisdom are suited to their character. Be assured, the prosperity of the Church depends not on a grand ceremonial, or crowds of admiring devotees, or the countenance of the state, however desirable these things may be, but only on the favor of God, whose blessing, and whose Spirit will be withdrawn, if we defile his sanctuary with superstitious rites. — F.]

Ver. 9. No greater sorrow can befall the teachers and hearers of the Word, than the cessation of divine worship. Want of the means of livelihood must exert a very prejudicial influence on the public service of God. Under the old economy there would be, of necessity, a failure of tithes and offerings. So now, when people have a hard and constant struggle for the bare means of subsistence, they will be far behind others in knowledge of the truth, in the proper training of children, and in mutual love.

Ver. 10. How quickly the Lord can turn all human joy into sorrow! How comes it then, O sinner, that thou cleavest so closely to temporal things which may be taken away at any moment? What reason have we to praise the goodness of the Lord, who gives us fruitful seasons, and fills our hearts with gladness?

Ver. 11. Husbandmen are too apt to desire the blessings of the field through avarice, or for the sake of their own carnal enjoyment. Therefore God sometimes sends them a sad instead of a joyful harvest-time.

Vers. 9–12. [Scott: We are so dependent upon God in everything, that no human wisdom or power can provide plenty when He pleases to send scarcity; without his rain, the seed even must perish, the trees of the field must wither, and all our temporal joys must sicken and die, and such judgments are emblems of the great day of retribution. How stupid then are sinners who are insensible under such judgments, or only mourn with a rebellious and unhumbled sorrow.

Pusey: The vine is the richness of divine knowledge, the fig the sweetness of contemplation and the joyousness in things eternal. Well is the life of the righteous likened to *a palm*, in that the palm below is rough to the touch, and in a manner enveloped in a dry bark, but above it is adorned with fruit, fair even to the eye; below it is compressed by the enfoldings of its bark, above it is spread out in amplitude of beautiful greenness. For so is the life of the elect, — despised below, beautiful above. — F.]

Vers. 13–14. Who shall blame God's ministers when they complain of the declension of religion? Who would not weep when he thinks of the miserable condition of many churches.

Fasting is one of the ways of deepening and manifesting repentance, sanctioned by Holy Scripture. When properly observed, the result will be to stimulate us to cry more earnestly to God. Under great calamities, men should be taught to look to God, not only in a general way, but they should be told to seek Him in special and appropriate exercises of penitence and prayer.

[Henry: They that are employed in holy things are therein God's ministers, and on Him they attend. A people may be filling up the measure of their iniquity apace, and yet may keep up a course of external performances in religion. As far as any public trouble is an obstruction to the course of religion, it is to be on that account more than any other, sadly lamented, especially by the Lord's ministers.

Pusey: The fast which the Lord approveth is that which lifteth up to Him hands full of almsdeeds, which is passed with brotherly love, which is seasoned with piety. What thou subtractest from thyself, bestow on another, that thy needy neighbor's flesh may be recruited. — F.]

Vers. 15–18. When God punishes, He seeks our improvement; but if this does not follow, He will utterly destroy. — The sufferings of the lower animals are caused by the sin of man.

[Henry. Though it is common for the heart not to rue what the eye sees not, yet that heart is hard indeed which does not humble itself when God's judgments are *before the eyes*. If when God's hand is lifted up, men *will not see*, when his hand is laid on they *shall see*. — The house of our God is the proper place for *joy* and *gladness;* when David goes to the *altar of God*, it is to God *my exceeding joy;* but when *joy and gladness are cut off from God's house*, either by corruption of holy things, or the persecution of holy persons, when serious godliness decays, and love waxes cold, then it is time to cry to the Lord, time to cry *Alas!* — F.]

Vers. 19, 20. It is one of the special duties of a teacher of the Word to be constant in prayer to God. — God hears the cries even of dumb animals. Then, O my soul, trust Him in all thy troubles, and know that He will listen to thy cries as much more readily than to theirs, as thou art of more value than they. The prophet, in his appeal to God, is not ashamed to be found in fellowship with the beasts of the field. So the Divine Spirit, by way of arousing our faith, points us to the fact that God feeds the young ravens, and gives the cattle their food. Yet how readily can God turn all our joys into deepest griefs! How unexpectedly can He do this, and by what feeble means! How preposterous, then, for any to regard their earthly possessions as secure, and to boast of them! How plainly God shows us that we live only in and through his blessing, that everything we possess is his gift. How thankful we should be when He permits us to enjoy fully what He has bestowed upon us!

[Henry: The prophet stirs them up to cry to God.

(1) By his own example. He would not put them upon doing that which he would not resolve to do himself; nay, whether they would do it or no, he would.

Note. — If God's ministers cannot prevail to affect others with the discoveries of divine wrath, yet they ought to be themselves affected with them; if they cannot bring others to cry to God, yet they must themselves be much in prayer. In times of trouble we must not only *pray*, but *cry*, must be fervent and importunate in prayer; and to God, from whom both the destruction is, and the salvation must be, ought our cry always to be directed

(2) By the example of the inferior creatures. The *beasts of the field* do not only *groan*, but they *cry unto Thee*. They appeal to thy pity, according to their capacity, and as if, though they are not capable of a rational and revealed religion, yet they had some dependence upon God by natural instinct. Much more will He put a favorable construction on the groanings of his own children, though sometimes so feeble, that they *cannot be uttered*.

Scott: God will hear the united prayers of the remnant of his servants, and often for their sakes will rescue a guilty nation from impending destruction.

Pusey: *O Lord, to Thee will I cry*. This is the only hope left, and contains all hopes. From the Lord was the infliction; in Him is the healing. The prophet appeals to God by his own Name, the faithful Fulfiller of his promises, Him who Is, and who had promised to hear all who call upon Him. Let others call to their idols, if they would, or remain stupid, the prophet would call unto God, and that earnestly. — F.]

SECTION II.

The Day of the Lord cometh! Repentance alone can avail to meet it. Hence the Demand for a Day of Public Humiliation.

Chapter II. 1–17.

1 Blow the trumpet[1] in Zion,
Sound[2] an alarm on my holy mountain.[3]
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
Because the day of Jehovah cometh,[4]
It is nigh at hand.

2 A day of darkness and of gloom,[5]
A day of clouds, and of thick mists,[6]
Like the morning[7] dawn spread upon the mountains;
So shall come a people numerous and mighty,
The like of which hath never been before,
And the like of which shall not come again,
In the years of many generations.

3 A fire devoureth before them,
And behind them a flame burneth;
Before them the land is as the garden of Eden,[8]
And behind them a desolate wilderness,
And nothing shall escape them.

4 Their appearance is like[9] the appearance of horses,
And like horsemen shall they run.

5 Like the noise of chariots, on the tops of mountains[10] they shall leap,
Like the sound of a flame of fire devouring stubble.
Like a strong people set in battle array.
6 Before them the people[11] are in pain,
All faces gather paleness.[12]

7 They shall run like mighty men,
They shall climb the wall like men of war;
And they shall march, each one in his way,
And they shall not turn aside[13] from their paths.

8 And no one shall press upon another,
They shall march each one in his path;[14]
And *though* they rush[15] upon the dart, they shall not be wounded.

9 They shall run to and fro in the city,
They shall run upon the wall;
They shall climb upon the houses,
They shall enter behind the windows like a thief.

10 Before them the earth trembleth,
The heavens quake,
The sun and the moon shall be darkened,
And the stars withdraw their brightness,
11 And Jehovah shall utter his voice before his host,
For his army is very great,
For he that executes his word is mighty;
For great is the day of Jehovah, and very terrible,
And who can endure it?

12 Yet even now,[16] saith Jehovah,[17]
Turn unto me with all your heart,
With fasting, and with weeping, and with lamentation,
13 And rend your heart, and not your garments.
And return to Jehovah your God,
For He is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger and of great kindness,
And repenteth Him of the evil.

14 Who knoweth?[18] He may return and repent
And leave a blessing behind,
A meat-offering and a drink-offering
For Jehovah your God.

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion,
Sanctify a fast,
Call a solemn assembly;
16 Gather the people,
Sanctify a congregation,
Assemble the old men,
Gather the children,
And those that suck the breasts;
Let the bridegroom desert his chamber,
And the bride her closet;
17 Between the porch and the altar,
Let the priests weep,
The ministers of Jehovah,
And say,
Spare thy people, O Jehovah,
And give not thy heritage to reproach,
That the heathen should rule over[19] (or use a bye-word against) them;
Wherefore should they say among the heathen (— the peoples)
Where is their God?

CRITICAL AND TEXTUAL.

1 Ver. 1. — The שׁוֹפָר of the Hebrews, according to Jerome, was a metal instrument in the shape of a horn, and had a tone of extraordinary power. Its root, שָׁפַר, to be bright, refers either to the metallic glitter of the instrument, or its clear ringing sound.

2 Ver. 1. — "*And sound.*" *And* is omitted in the Vulg., Sept., Arab., Chald., and five MSS. omit ו. There is more energy in the passage without it.

3 Ver. 1. — "*Holy mountain.*" קָדְשִׁי is a noun, lit., "mountain *of my holiness.*" The adject. קָדוֹשׁ is only applied to persons and never to things.

4 Ver 1. — "*The day — cometh.*" The perf. בָּא is used as the present to express the certainty of the event.

5 Ver. 2. — "*Darkness and gloom.*" אֲפֵלָה is often connected with חֹשֶׁךְ, to express a kind of climax. Its root is not used in Heb., but we find it in the Arab. أَفَلَ.

6 Ver. 2. — "*Clouds and thick mists.*" עֲרָפֶל, formed apparently from עָרִיף, a cloud, and אָפַל, to be dark, corresponding to the Greek ὀρφνη. Here, too, a gradation is marked.

7 Ver. 2. — "*Like the morning dawn,*" etc. The Vulg. renders it, "as the morning spread upon the mountains, a people much and mighty," but the accents will not admit of this. Newcome has it, "like the dusk," but this suggests evening rather than morning. It properly means the gray of the morning, while the sun is still far below the horizon. It is one of the names of the Nile, from the turbid color of its water.

8 Ver. 3. — "*Eden.*" עֵדֶן, an old Semit. word, found also in various dialects in the sense of pleasure, like the Gr. ἡδονή. In the sing. with zere on the penult., it always means Paradise. With seghol on the penult., it is the name of a part of Mesopotamia. In the plur. form it denotes pleasures. Ps. xxxvi. 9; 2 Sam. i. 24.

9 Ver. 4. — "*Is like.*" כ is here used παραβολικῶς compar., and not, as Theodoret supposes, ἐπιτατικῶς intens.

10 Ver. 5. — "*On the tops of mountains,*" etc. עַל־רָאשֵׁי must be connected with יְרַקֵּדוּן, they shall leap, and not with כְּקוֹל; the latter union is forbidden by the accents, and by the use of the word "chariots," whose "noise" is only heard on level ground.

11 Ver. 6. — "*Peoples.*" The plural form עַמִּים is used, not as Credner supposes, with reference to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but simply to denote people generally.

12 Ver. 6. — "*Paleness.*" פָּארוּר is variously understood. The Sept. render the clause ὡς πρὸς καυμαχύτρας, as the burning of a pot. The Chald., Syr., Vulg., Arab., "become like a pot or have the blackness of a pot." But there is nothing in the nature of the thing, or in the etymology of the word, to warrant the "blackness" of our E. V. Cramer explains rather than translates the words: "all faces contract their muscles." The root of the word is פָּאַר, to be beautiful, to glow: and it literally means "ruddiness." This gathers, or withdraws itself, and the countenance becomes pale.

13 Ver. 7. — "*They shall not turn aside.*" יְעַבְּטוּן is variously explained. Many expositors take it in the sense of *pervertere*, as if it were יְעַוְּתוּן, to bend. Others get its meaning from the Arab. صَلَطَ, to split, or divide. One MS., De Ross, has the reading, יְבַעֲטוּן, they strike not out behind, like horses. The sense is, they move in a compact mass, bending neither to the right nor the left, forwards nor backwards.

14 Ver. 8. — "*Each one in his path,*" lit., the mighty one, גֶּבֶר, used here poetically for אִישׁ.

15 Ver. 8. — "*Though they rush,*" etc. The meaning of this line is plain enough, *i. e.*, nothing can arrest their march; but the renderings of it are various, growing out of the senses given to בְּעַד. De Wette renders it: "*Und zwischen Waffen stürzen sie hindurch, brechen den Zug nicht ab.*" — Wünsche: "*Und hinter dem Wurfpiess fallen sie, nicht brechen sie ab.*" On the whole, I prefer the rendering of Tregelles: "Though they rush," etc.

16 Ver. 12. — "*Yet even now.*" Credner, without reason, supplies a שׁוּבוּ after וְגַם עַתָּה.

17 Ver. 12. — "*Saith Jehovah.*" נְאֻם is most frequently used as the part. pass. constr. = "the voice of Jehovah is."

18 Ver. 14. — "*Who knoweth.*" The interrogative particle אִם is omitted here as in Jon. iii. 9. The question is expressed only by the tone. Holzh. takes the phrase מִי יוֹדֵעַ to = every one knows, *i. e.*, it is quite certain; but this sense is too absolute.

19 Ver. 17. — "*Rule over.*" The primary meaning of מָשַׁל is to make like, and in its nominal form it has the sense of similitude, parable, proverb, song. Scholars have been a good deal puzzled how to reconcile the signification of *making like* and *ruling*, which last sense the word undoubtedly has in many places. When used in this last sense it is usually followed by בְּ, rarely (Wünsche says never) by עַל or אֶל. Tregelles renders it in this place, "to sing a song of derision," and De Wette, "spotter," which, I think, the context favors. Pusey and Wünsche insist on the sense of our E. V. "rule over." — F.]

EXEGETICAL.

This portion of the prophecy consists of two parts. The first is contained in vers. 1–11, in which the prophet explains more fully than he had before done, the misery that was coming on the land, a harbinger of the great and terrible day of the Lord. The second part includes vers. 12–17, and declares that timely repentance would secure God's gracious help, and therefore that the priests should earnestly deal with the people to this end.

Ver. 1. **Blow the Trumpet in Zion.** This is a call to the priests. They must give a signal of alarm from Zion, which is to be understood not in the local sense, but as including the whole of Jerusalem. Then comes the more precise locality, "the holy mountain." The design of this signal is to arouse the inhabitants of the land, and to apprise them that an event of terrible magnitude is close at hand. **The Day** is the judgment day of the Lord. There is a climax in the clauses announcing its approach, "it is coming," "it is near," *i. e.*, its coming is not an event of the far distant future, but it will be very soon.

Ver. 2. The **Day** is one of **darkness.** Four terms are used to show how intense it will be. See Ex. x. 22; Deut. iv. 11. It will be darker than that of Egypt, and than that of Sinai. Here the "darkness" is to be understood in a literal sense, for by the vast swarms of locusts, the sun would be obscured (ver. 10, and Exod. xiv. 15). That the prophet had these swarms of locusts in view is evident from what follows. כְּשַׁחַר belongs to the following עַם רָב. As the early morning dawns upon the mountains, so this "people" comes. "This," says Keil, "is to be understood of the shining caused by the reflected rays of the sun from the wings of a swarm of locusts." [Some, says Dr. Pusey, have thought that there is here an allusion to the appearance which, the inhabitants of Abyssinia well know, precedes the swarm of locusts. A sombre yellow light is cast upon the ground from the reflection, it is thought, of their yellow wings. But that appearance seems to be peculiar to that country. — F.] The image naturally exhibits the suddenness and universality of the darkness, when men looked for light. As to the meaning of שַׁחַר, expositors are greatly divided. Bauer thinks that the points of comparison are the quickness with which, and the wide extent over which the dawn spreads itself. Credner's view is, that as the morning light overspreading the hills is a symbol and pledge of life and joy, so these clouds shall come overspreading the land with darkness and misery. [Wünsche takes it in the sense of the "morning gray," *i. e.*, the time when the morning is wrapped in a sort of darkish or dusky gray; the meaning being, that the nature of this "day" will be made known, just as the gray dawn of morning proclaims the coming day. — F.] **There hath not been ever the like.** The phrase seems to have been borrowed from Exod. x. 14, — a passage on which the prophet, in a general way, seems to have had his eye, — where the same thing is said of the plague of locusts sent upon Egypt.

Ver. 3. **A fire devoureth.** This description is based on what had been already experienced, namely, that the desolation caused by locusts had been attended usually by drought and terrible heat. But now the heat grows into a fierce flame, analogous to the awful displays when God revealed Himself at Sinai. So here, the army of locusts is God's host. פְּלֵיטָה. That which has "escaped," namely, the "fire," or the desolation caused by it, has not remained in the land. [This

is a strained sense. The exposition of Newcome, Pusey, and Wünsche is more natural and sensible. "There is nothing that has escaped it, *i. e.*, this army." Pusey adds, "the word being used elsewhere of the *persons* who escape, — captivity or captives, — suggests in itself that we should not linger by the type of the locusts only, but think of enemies more terrible, who destroy men. — F.]

Vers. 4, 5. **Their appearance — in battle array.** The entrance of this fearful host is described. The head of the locust has a certain resemblance to that of the horse. Their celerity of movement is compared to that of horsemen; and in ver. 5, the noise caused by their leaping is likened to that made by chariots on rough mountain roads, so that their appearance is somewhat similar to that of an army advancing in battle array. Their noise in devouring plants and herbs is also compared to the crackling of flames in a field of stubble. [Pusey: The amazing noise of the flight of locusts is likened by those who have heard them, to all sorts of deep sharp rushing sounds. The prophet combines purposely things incompatible, the terrible heavy bounding of the scythed chariot, and the light speed with which these countless hosts should in their flight bound over the tops of the mountains where God had made no paths for man. — F.]

Ver. 6. **Before them the peoples,** etc. עַמִּים here has the usual sense of "peoples," "nations," since the day of the Lord would not be confined to one country. **All faces** lose their glowing color, *i. e.*, the blood retires from the cheeks, so that they grow pale. קִבֵּץ is here to be taken in the sense of אָסַף in ver. 10 and iii. 15.

Ver. 7. **They shall run,** etc. With resistless power they advance and march toward their goal. They run to attack. In like manner they climb the wall. עָבַט = to change or shift the way, *i. e.*, to turn from one's way and go into that of another, so that the latter is hindered. [Pusey: They are on God's message and they linger not. Men can mount a wall few at a time; the locusts scale it much more steadily, compactly, irresistibly. The picture unites the countless multitude, condensed march, and entire security of the locusts with the might of warriors. — F.]

Vers. 8-10. **And no one shall press,** etc. Those behind shall not press upon those before. No weapons can stop the advance of this host; or arrest its march. They rush through, or between, or under the *darts*, or swords. They go forward as if no obstacles were in their way. Of course this does not mean that any attempt was actually made to oppose their progress, but simply that it would be vain to resist them, by the means ordinarily used to arrest an army (ver. 9), comp. Ex. x. 6. The picture in vers. 7-9 is perfectly true to nature. Jerome (*in loc.*) says, "We have ourselves lately seen this very thing in this province (Palestine). When the locusts come and fill the whole space betweeen earth and sky, they fly in perfect order, as if obedient to a divine command, so that they look like the squares of a pavement. Each one holds its own place, not diverging from it even so much as by a finger's breadth. To these locusts nothing is impenetrable, fields, meadows, trees, cities, houses, even their most secret chambers." The accounts of more recent observers agree with this description. There is a design in this picture so elaborate in its details. The more terrible the visitation of locusts appears, the more certain would it be, that when the day of the Lord came, this host would become God's instrument in the infliction of his judgment. What follows in ver. 10 is fully consonant with the fact, though there is some rhetorical amplification, as the prophet, once for all, sees in the swarm of locusts not a mere natural phenomenon, but an evidence of the coming of the day of the Lord. The view we take of an event naturally gives a certain coloring to the picture of it, and a certain climactic amplication is proper, when the event is one that surpasses all previous experience. **Before them,** or it, *i. e.*, this great and mighty people. **The earth trembles.** What more natural than that heaven and earth should be terrified by such a host, — one so dreadful in fact, so much more dreadful when viewed as the host of an avenging God? This most awful effect cannot, indeed, be seen or heard, like these marching hosts and the noise they produce; it can only be felt, and thus all the wider scope is given to the terrified imagination. The obscuration of the sun, moon, and stars is real, but this darkness becomes more fearfully impressive, since the locust swarms appear as a tempest cloud of divine wrath. (Comp. Jer. xiii. 10; Ezek. xii. 7; Mark xiii. 24.)

Ver. 11. **And Jehovah shall utter his voice.** Probably a real event is referred to, — a thunderstorm in connection with the coming of the locusts. The prophet hears the thunder not so much with his outward ear as mentally, recognizing it as a manifestation of God. Only such displays of power as those described in vers. 10, 11, would befit the greatness of the host sent to do Jehovah's will, and the terribleness of the day of the Lord that was coming, — a day so terrible as to wring from the prophet the inquiry, "who can endure it?" See Jer. x. 10; Mal. iii. 1.

Vers. 12-17. **Yet even now,** etc. Though the anger of God is so clearly revealed that men may see his day coming, yet He says, **Turn unto me,** and thus points out the way in which his anger may be averted. If they repented, they would escape these judgments, and find God gracious. **With all your heart.** This is the most essential thing, and so is named first, yet this hearty repentance will also manifest itself outwardly. But the prophet warns the people that a merely external repentance will effect nothing (ver. 13), comp. Ps. li. 19; Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Such repentance, however, as that described in vers. 12, 13, will avail, because "He is gracious" (Ex. xxxiv. 6; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16). Therefore is there hope that He will avert his judgments. **Who knoweth.** That God is such as He is here described is beyond a doubt, but whether, under present circumstances, He will display his mercy, is not so certain. This depends on the conduct of the people, and hence the prophet would have them to bear in mind, that pardon would not come to them as a matter of course, and that their repentance must not be of an easy and formal kind. **He will return.** Jehovah is conceived of as on his way from heaven for the purpose of judgment; but He may stop, and return to heaven. **Leave behind Him,** *i. e.*, when He returns to heaven (Hos. v. 5). **A blessing,** *i. e.*, an abundant harvest, so that there may be no lack of those offerings, the materials of which had been destroyed by the locusts (i. 9-13). Instead of a day of judgment (involving a greater desolation than any as yet experienced), there was hope that God would give another crop to replace the one destroyed (ver. 5). Since repentance opened such prospects of blessing, the priests should summon the people to meet for the

purpose of humiliation and prayer, and they should themselves, in the name of the people, implore God's mercy.

Ver. 16 repeats what was said before in i. 14, but more in detail. **Sanctify a congregation,** *i. e.*, call a meeting of the congregation for sacred purposes. No age should be excepted, because the entire people deserved punishment and needed to repent. Even the joy of the bridegroom and the bride must give place to penitential mourning. What the priests should do, when the people were assembled, is defined in ver. 17. They shall stand **between the porch and the altar,** *i. e.*, immediately before the entrance to the sanctuary and turning toward it, they should pray to God, appealing to Him in behalf of the people as his own covenant people.

[Pusey: The porch in this, Solomon's temple, was in fact a tower in front of the Holy of holies, of the same breadth with the temple. The brazen altar for burnt-offerings stood in front of it. The space between the porch and the altar, became an inner part of the court of the priests. It seems to have been a place of prayer for priests. It is spoken of as an aggravation of the sins of those twenty-five idolatrous priests, that here, where they ought to worship God, they turned their backs toward the temple of the Lord to worship the sun. Here Zechariah was standing, when the spirit of God came upon him, and he rebuked the people, and they stoned him. — F.]

THEOLOGICAL.

1. The day of the Lord (i. 15; ii. 1; iii. 4–14), is a phrase used only by the prophets. If, as some think, Obadiah is the oldest, the phrase occurs first in Ob. 15, and next in the above marked places in Joel. If this view of the relative ages of these prophets be correct, we may assume that the phrase was introduced into prophetic language by Obadiah. Certainly Joel uses it in a way to show that he regarded the idea expressed by it as one well known to those for whom he prophesied, though, as Ewald suggests, the expression may be here presented in its oldest and simplest form. "As the king of a vast empire, — Ewald adds, — may for a time so completely disappear from the view of his subjects, as to be the same as if he had ceased to exist, and then suddenly reappear among them, in the fullness of his power to hold a long delayed assize, so the Invisible One may put off, or seem to put off the day when He will appear as the Supreme Judge. The idea of the "day of the Lord" is closely connected with that of Jehovah as king, who as such has a "day" for men, — a day in the pregnant sense of the word, a day for judgment. Jehovah as king must and will, in due time, suddenly and miraculously judge and subdue all who are in rebellion against Him. He will subject all things to his own holy and righteous control, thus showing that his will is the only and absolute rule; and will rectify all that is now disorderly in the condition of things on the earth. As Israel was then the kingdom of Jehovah in a special sense, "the day" for Israel as God's people, would be the epoch of their perfect and glorious deliverance from all their enemies. This appears in ch. iii. The "day" is that one on which Jehovah sits in judgment on all his foes, and when Israel's prosperity begins. Yet it is even for Israel a day of judgment, — one that shall make it manifest whether they are faithful or not to their obligations as God's people. If not, even they shall be destroyed, unless timely repentance intervenes. This view is presented in chaps. i.–ii. Thus while the ultimate result of the judgment will be the salvation and glory of Israel, the immediate design of the day of the Lord is the punishment of the heathen as the enemies of his people, and of the latter as well if untrue to their covenant relation. Hence all the predicates that describe the day, mark it as one of judgment. It is "great and very terrible" (ii. 11; iii. 4); "dark and gloomy" (ii. 2; Amos v. 18; Is. ii. 12). In the announcement of this "day," Israel is not so much consoled, as warned against self-conceit and security, — a warning all the more earnest on account of the uncertainty of its coming. Hence men should be always ready for it. Still, Joel does not as yet seem to know how far the kingdoms of Israel and of Judah may be faithless to their calling as God's people, nor what divine judgment shall overtake them. He sees them, on the one hand, menaced by judgments, but on the other hand, by their penitence averting them, so that actually these judgments in their destructive power fall upon the heathen alone, while Israel and Judah are redeemed and glorified. The יוֹם־יְהוָה is the ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου of the New Testament. Joel, however, does not use the phrase "day of the Lord" with reference to the hope of Messiah's coming, since we find no such hope in any part of his prophecy.

2. The next question is this, — Considering the "day of the Lord" as one of menace to Israel, how was it regarded by the prophet himself? We begin by saying that the "day," as viewed by Joel, was not marked by a series of events, but by a single, sudden, and conclusive act. And therefore Keil applies modern speculative notions to the exposition of the phrase, when he says, "each particular judgment by which God chastises his own people for their sins, or destroys the enemies of his kingdom, may be regarded as a *moment* in the 'day of the Lord.'" If so, why should Joel connect the approach of that day with the visitation of locusts? As already mentioned in ch. i. the allegoric signification assigned by some to the locusts (*i. e.*, hostile hosts), has arisen out of the union of two heterogeneous things. This allegoric sense may be found in those other prophets, one of whose chief themes was the judgment to be inflicted upon Israel by means of heathen nations — a judgment which then appears as "the day of the Lord" for Israel. But the verbal text will not admit of this principle of interpretation in ch. i. The objection, however, does not hold in ch. ii., where the prophet describes the entrance of swarms of locusts into the land as an actual event, and also designates it as the coming of the day of the Lord. Some interpreters take the locust visitation as a presage and a symbol of an invasion by hosts of a different kind, partly on the ground that it is denoted as the coming of the day of the Lord, and partly from the use of the term "northern" in ver. 20, which cannot be applied to the locusts. There is, however, not much force in the first of these considerations, for while there is, in a general way, an obvious analogy between the swarms of locusts and an invading army, much is here said about the one that will not apply to the other. The reference to Is. xiii. is more to the purpose, for he quotes the very words of Joel, and describes the judgment of Babel in terms that show that he understood the locust invasion in an allegoric sense. But though

the language of the two prophets is so similar, it does not follow that they refer to the same events, nor that their words are to be understood in precisely the same sense.

But there are positive difficulties in the way of the allegoric interpretation of this chapter. For example, what can be meant by "driving the locusts into the sea" (ii. 20)? Again, the question arises, if Israel is threatened by an enemy, by what one? The word "northern" proves nothing. It is strange, on this theory, that while Joel describes the judgment on Israel by some foe, he gives us no hint even by which to identify him. There is no indication that the heathen nations were to be the chosen instruments for this purpose. On the contrary, what they do against Israel is exhibited as a crime which shall bring down God's judgments on their own head. This method of exposition also overlooks the differences in the times when the several prophets lived. In Joel's days, the great empires had not yet appeared as the special instruments of God's judgments on his covenant people. In this character they had not yet come within the range of the prophet's vision. He knew, indeed, that Israel's sins deserved, and would receive chastisement, but he had not yet been told that the heathen nations would be God's agents in inflicting it. Whenever they are named, it is as being themselves the objects of wrath, while Israel appears as a penitent and the recipient of God's mercy.

But it may be said that while the prophet describes a real locust visitation, he sees in it, at least to a certain extent, a type of the "day of the Lord — a day of judgment;" or in other words, what the land had already experienced might warn its inhabitants that they would have a still more bitter experience when that "day" arrived. But the difficulty is that if we suppose one event to be in any sense formally typical of the other, we find in the minutely detailed account of the type much that in no way corresponds with the antitype. The darkness, the terror, and the desolation produced by the locusts might be in themselves typical, but these are the features on which the least emphasis is laid by the prophet.

The view which we prefer is this. The land had been desolated by locusts to an unparalleled extent. The prophet had reason to fear that this was the harbinger of a worse calamity of the same sort. He sees in the visitation the beginning of the day of the Lord. The locust army is led by God himself, and hence the lively colors of that picture of it which he draws. The plague of locusts and the day of the Lord are not to be taken as two distinct things. They differ, not like the type and the antitype, but as the beginning and the end of the same thing. And so he says, "the day of the Lord cometh, it is near." He sees its approach, still he hopes that the repentance of the people in answer to his earnest appeals, will ward off its further effects, — that Israel, warned and taught by the earlier and merely relative judgment, may escape the final one, and that the enemies of God's people alone shall be overwhelmed by it. The day of the Lord in the highest sense of the words, did not, indeed, come with the calamity by which Israel was then chastised, but each preliminary judgment was really the precursor and pledge of the absolute and final one. All that we can affirm is that the prophet saw in this locust visitation not merely a natural phenomenon, but the finger of God. In these terrible scenes he hears the voice of the Living God calling his people to repentance. As God's messenger he reëchoes the earnest appeal, knowing that ere long He will come to judge his people, though the exact time of his coming none can tell.

3. The plague of locusts was a punishment of the nation's sins. The prophet, therefore, demands hearty repentance, and a return to God. He, however, does not name the sins which had brought down this chastisement. There seems to have been no one prevalent form of corruption at that time, and, in particular, there is no distinct trace of idolatry. But this shows how earnest God is in punishing sin, since not only do gross iniquities awaken his displeasure, but also sins of the heart, though there may be no outward display of them. His love to his people also appears, since He summons them to repentance, in circumstances, in which, without such a call, they might have sunk into a condition of dangerous security. The earnestness of the prophet is also shown by his recognizing these calamities as divine judgments for sin, and his evident belief that although the people might outwardly seem to be in the right way, they might really be at the same time ripe for punishment. The repentance he demands, should consist essentially of turning with the whole heart to God, and which would outwardly manifest itself by fasting, weeping, and rending the garments. These were expressive symbols, and on this very account there was danger of putting them in the place of the inward feelings which they implied and represented. Against this mistake he warns the people, "rend your hearts and not your garments." But even their sorrow for sin, however real, would be of no avail without an actual turning to God. The repentance which He demands, is such as both has its seat in the heart, and displays itself in the life. Prayer for pardon is a prominent feature of the public solemn humiliation described in ver. 17. As the whole land had been already chastised, and was still threatened with a severer infliction, the repentance suited to the occasion was not simply that of individuals, but of the whole nation as such. Of course, this national penitence has its root in that of individual men, but it does not rest there. As Israel had only one legal sanctuary — the Temple, — all public religious ceremonies must take place there, and through the ministry of the one priesthood. The public fast-day demanded by the Prophet is a Biblical precedent for the observance of similar days in Christian times and lands. They are as proper under the New Economy as they were under the Old. In this penitential prayer, there is not only an appeal to God's mercy, but a declaration that his honor is concerned in the continued existence of Israel as his people. To abandon Israel wholly would give occasion to the heathen to blaspheme, as if God had been unable to save his people, or had forgotten his promises to do so. This relation, and these promises were not designed, nor did they really tend to beget a sinful security, but to keep alive in the hearts of God's people an humble faith and hope. Israel bows under God's hand, but at the same time trusts Him as his God. This relation of ancient Israel is repeated, but in a far higher form and degree in the sonship of God's people under the New Covenant.

Repentance is necessary. It alone can help, yet the punitive justice of God has also its influence for good. For while it is certain that the righteous Lord will punish sin, his grace, and pity, and patience are no less certain. And so if there be

no defect in the repentance of the sinner, forgiveness will not be wanting on the part of God. This truth is most emphatically expressed in ver. 18, where a rich promise immediately follows a severe menace. Yet the observation of Reiger is a very just one, namely, that the true penitent must and will leave wholly in God's hand the mitigation of the temporal punishment which he may have brought upon himself on account of his sins.

HOMILETICAL.

Ver. 1. *Blow the trumpet.* It is the office of a minister of God's Word, when great calamities are imminent, to sound an alarm, and call men to repentance. *The day of the Lord*, etc. All the remarkable judgments with which God visits individuals, or a land, are harbingers of the final judgment of the world, and whatever there is of the terrible in the former, will be found in the latter, in a far higher degree, by godless sinners. How stupid the security of those who, in the face of such events, with ruin impending over their heads, are not disturbed even for a moment. The day of the Lord cometh. (1) Nothing is more certain than the fact of its coming. (2) But nothing is more uncertain than the time of its coming. The call to prepare for it should be continually sounding. It does not come so quickly, perhaps, as we in our impatience often wish, but it will come more quickly than the secure imagine. Its delay is not designed to beget wantonness in men, but only shows — as we should gratefully own — the long suffering of the Lord, who desires not that any should perish; God warns men often, and for a long time, but at last the decision will come. We should not be hasty in predicting when the day of the Lord will come, but we should be reminded of it in all the visitations of his providence, and we should try to put ourselves in the light of that day. As the special divine judgments will find their completest accomplishment in that last great day of wrath, they are so described as to fill men's minds with a wholesome terror, and to convince them how utterly unable they shall be to endure it.

[Pusey: Ver. 1. The trumpet was wont to sound in Zion only for religious uses: to call together the congregations for holy meetings, to usher in the beginnings of their months, and their solemn days with festival gladness. Now, in Zion itself, the stronghold of the kingdom, the holy city, the place which God chose to put his Name there, which He had promised to establish, the trumpet was to be used only for sounds of alarm and fear. Alarm could not penetrate there, without having pervaded the whole land. Good is the trouble which shaketh carnal peace, vain security, and the rest of bodily delight, when men, weighing their sins, are shaken with fear and trembling, and repent. — F.]

Ver. 2. *A day of darkness.* A day of judgment is a manifestation of God's wrath against sin, after the measure of his grace which seeks to save and bless them has been exhausted. Hence darkness is its proper symbol.

[Henry: Extraordinary judgments are rare things and seldom happen, which is an instance of God's patience. Let none be proud of the beauty of their grounds any more than of their bodies, for God can soon change the face of both. — F.]

Ver. 6. *The people tremble.* An ever-growing dread will accompany and enhance the terrors of approaching judgment. Men in their wanton security are all the while preparing the material of such fear.

[Henry: When God frowns upon men, the lights of heaven will be small joy to them. For, man by rebelling against his Creator, has forfeited the benefit of all his creatures. None can escape the arrests of God's wrath, can make head against the force of it, or bear up under the weight of it.

Pusey: The judgments of God hold on their course, each going straight to that person for whom God, in the awful wisdom of his justice, ordains it. No one judgment or chastisement comes by chance. Each is directed and adapted, weighed and measured, by infinite wisdom, and reaches just that soul for which God appointed it, and no other, and strikes upon it with just that force which God ordains it. — F.]

Ver. 11. *Very great is his army.* God can use any creature as his instrument to do his work. How many and mighty the hosts which He can send against men! The smallest things can become his agents to produce the greatest results. The mightiness of God, and the weakness of men, are here most distinctly displayed. *Who can endure?* No one who does not turn in penitence to God. This is a most momentous question, which we should often and seriously ponder. O what a creature is man! How proud when trouble is at a distance! How powerless and despairing when it overtakes him!

Ver. 12. *Yet also even now*, etc. These words introduce the exhortation to repentance, to guard the people against the notion, that, when the prophet called on them to repent, and assured them that they would escape punishment if they did so, he was speaking in a sort of formal way, and in his own name. Both the exhortation and the promise come from God. When repentance enters, then comes help and hope. Repentance alone can ward off divine judgments. It is not enough that repentance be strong in its outward manifestations, as fasting and weeping, it must also be deep-seated, hearty, and not superficial. *Turn unto the Lord.* A call that is both needful and salutary, though, alas, too often unheeded. Grief for sin is only the half of repentance, it must be accompanied by a real turning to God. Only thus, O man, shalt thou obtain pardon; only thus will there be an actual turning away from sin. Sinner! despair not on account of thy misdeeds. Is God's wrath against sin very great? His grace in pardoning it is greater still. So rich is the grace of God that the prophet is at a loss for words adequately to describe it. How ready God is to repent Him of the evil! Make a trial of his readiness and see. He who does not seek God's grace as a penitent will never know how great it is. How much more willing is God to leave behind Him a blessing rather than a curse. No one would ever truly repent unless grace planted in the heart the seeds of faith and hope. Though a gracious hope grows slowly, yet the wavering heart will often be, in a secret way, sustained by it, and such a soul will better apprehend it than one filled with overmuch confidence.

[Jeremy Taylor: Although all sorrow for sins hath not the same expression, nor the same degree of pungency and sensitive trouble, yet it is not a godly sorrow, unless it really produces these effects; *i. e.* (1), that it makes us really to hate, and (2) actually to decline sin; and (3) produces in us a fear of God's anger, a sense of the guilt of

his displeasure; (4) and then such consequent trouble as can consist with such apprehension of the Divine displeasure; which, if it express not in tears and hearty complaints, must be expressed in watchings and strivings against sin; in patiently bearing the rod of God; in confession of our sins; in perpetual begging of pardon; and in all the natural productions of these according to our temper and constitution; it must be a sorrow of the reasonable faculty, the greatest of its kind.

PUSEY: Although the mercy of God is in itself one and simple, yet is called *abundant*, on account of its divers effects. For God knows how in a thousand ways to succor his own. — F.]

Ver. 14. *A meat-offering*, etc. God's glory and our salvation are so intimately conjoined, that the pardon of the guilty is facilitated thereby, since the salvation of the sinner redounds to the glory of God.

[HENRY: Now observe: (1) The manner of the expectation is very humble and modest. *Who knows?* Some think it is expressed thus doubtfully to check the presumption of the people, and to quicken them to a holy carefulness. Or, rather, it is expressed doubtfully, because it is the removal of a temporal judgment that they here promise themselves, of which we cannot be so confident, as that God is gracious. (2) The matter of the expectation is very pious, they hope God will return and *leave a blessing behind Him*, not as if He were about to go from them, and they could be content with any blessing in lieu of his presence, but *behind Him, i. e.*, after He has ceased his controversy.

PUSEY: God has promised forgiveness of sins to those who turn to Him. But He has not promised, either to individuals or churches, that He will remit the temporal punishment which He had threatened. He forgave David his sin (against Uriah). But the temporal punishment of his sin pursued him even on the bed of death. God often visits the penitent soul, and by some sweetness with which the soul is bathed leaves a token of his renewed presence. — F.]

Vers. 15, 16. *Sanctify a fast — Gather the people.* Fasting is a refined external discipline, promotive of prayer and piety. Only we must take care not to make a merit of it. — *The people.* By penitence and prayer, an entire community may be saved from a great calamity. — *Children.* Parents should be aroused to a deeper sorrow for their sins by the thought of their young children, who are also members of God's Church, and included in his covenant. As little children share in the calamities caused by the sins of their parents, their common distress should be presented before the Lord, and deliverance from it asked. — *The Bride.* In seasons of general distress and danger, we should abstain from the most innocent enjoyment.

[HENRY: It is good to bring little children, as soon as they are capable of understanding anything, to religious assemblies, that they may be trained up betimes in the way they should go. — Private joys must always give way to public sorrows, both those for affliction, and those for sin.

ROBINSON: It is very consolatory to observe, even in the midst of this terrific visitation — the last harbinger of the Saviour's coming — an invitation of mercy. If men will then but seek the Lord with their whole heart, in deep humiliation, and turn away from their sins, He will be inquired of. At the eleventh hour, when the time for work is all but gone, they may find admission into his vineyard. Happy is it when outward afflictions of any kind lead us to true repentance. — F.]

Ver. 17. *Let the Priests.* The special duty of the priesthood was to exhort the people to repentance, to stand between them and the Lord and pray for them, and hence it is the duty of every Christian, as a spiritual priest, to stir up his fellow Christians to repentance, and to pray for them. — *Spare Thy People*, — a petition full of humility and confidence, *i. e.*, "look upon our needs, but remember also thy glory, O Lord!" What we need is God's mercy. We can appeal to what his grace has made of us. There is the strongest antithesis between God's people and the heathen, just as there is between God and idols. — *Where is their God.* God will never abandon his people, — a truth full of comfort to them, though it affords no ground for carnal security. On the contrary, it is fitted to stimulate us to be faithful to Him, as He is faithful to us.

[HENRY: Ministers must themselves be affected with those things wherewith they desire to affect others. — The maintaining of the credit of the nation among its neighbors, is a blessing to be desired and prayed for, by all that wish well to it. But that reproach of the Church is especially to be dreaded and deprecated which reflects upon God. — F.]

PART SECOND.

THE PROMISE.

CHAPTERS II. 18–III. 21.

SECTION I.

Annihilation of the Locust Army. Reparation of the Damage done by it, by a Rich Blessing.

CHAPTER II. 18–27.

18 Then Jehovah will be jealous[1] for his land.
And will pity his people.

19 And Jehovah will answer and say unto his people,
Behold I will send[2] you the corn,[3]
The new wine, and the oil;
And ye shall be satisfied[4] therewith,
And I will no longer make you
A reproach among the heathen.

20 And I will remove far from you the northern[5] *host*,
And will drive him into a dry and desolate land;
His face (or his van) toward the east sea,
His rear towards the west sea.
And his stench shall arise,
And his ill savor shall ascend,
For He has done great things.[6]

21 Fear not, O Land,
Be glad and rejoice,
For Jehovah hath done great things.

22 Fear not, ye beasts of the field![7]
For the pastures of the wilderness have sprung up,
The tree beareth her fruit,
The fig tree and the vine yield their strength.[8]

23 O ye children of Zion rejoice and be glad
In Jehovah your God;
For He gives you the former rain[9] in just measure,
And sends you, in showers, the early and the latter rain, as aforetime.[10]

24 And the threshing floors shall be full of corn,
And the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

25 And I will restore[11] (or replace) the years[12]
Which the locust, the cankerworm, the caterpillar and the palmerworm have devoured,
My great army which I sent against you.

26 Then ye shall eat in plenty[13] and be satisfied,
And shall praise the name of Jehovah your God,
Who hath dealt wondrously with you.
And my people shall never be ashamed.

27 And[14] ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,
And I Jehovah am your God, and none else.
And my people shall never be ashamed.

CRITICAL AND TEXTUAL.

1 Ver. 18. — קִנֵּא with ל or ב = to be jealous for some one out of love.

2 Ver. 19. — שֹׁלֵחַ, more lit., "am sending."

3 Ver. 19. — הַדָּגָן: the article is used to give prominence to the products which the Lord promises to send.

4 Ver. 19. — שְׂבַעְתֶּם אֹתוֹ. The sing. אֹתוֹ is here used collectively.

5 Ver. 20. — "*Northern.*" Schmoller insists that הַצְּפוֹנִי should be rendered "destroyer." See Exeget. note on this ver.

6 Ver. 20. — הִגְדִּיל לַעֲשׂוֹת, lit., "he has magnified to do." Schmoller renders it: "*er hat grossgethan.*" The same phrase occurs in ver. 21, which shows that it cannot be taken in the sense of boasting. It is synonymous with the מַפְלִא לַעֲשׂוֹת (Judg. xiii. 19), and עָשָׂה לְהַפְלִיא, ii. 26.

7 Ver. 22. — "*Field.*" שָׂדַי is not the plur. for שָׂדִים but the sing. = שָׂדֶה, according to the analogy of שָׂדָי, Ps. xcvi. 12.

8 Ver. 22. — נָתְנוּ חֵיל, "give strength," like the Lat. *edere fructum*. The metaphor is one in which the cause is put for the effect. Only used here and in Ps. i. 4.

9 Ver. 23. — הַמּוֹרֶה, "the early rain," from יָרָה, *jecit*, perhaps because its season was *post jactam sementem*. Keil renders it "a teacher for righteousness." But the word when so used is followed by בְּ, more rarely by אֶל, or מִן. Ewald and Umbreit take מוֹרֶה in the sense of "early rain," but render the phrase "rain for righteousness," *i. e.*, as a sign of their being again received into the divine righteousness. But this is a strained sense; better, "according to right," *i. e.*, in just measure, as the ground requires.

10 Ver. 23. — "*Aforetime*.": בָּרִאשׁוֹן. There seems to be an omission of כְּ. The Sept. render it καθὼς ἔμπροσθεν; the Syr., *ut antea*; the Vulg., *sicut in principio*. The Chald. and Arab. have the reading "as in the month Nisan."

11 Ver. 25. — The primary meaning of שָׁלֵם is "to be whole," but it is here used in the sense of "replace, or make good."

12 Ver. 26. — "*Years*," שָׁנִים the plur. form used, perhaps, only in a poetic sense, as in Gen. xxi. 7; Ps. xlv. 9, 10; 1 Sam. xvii. 43.

13 Ver. 26. — "*Eat in plenty*," lit., "eat an eating, or eat to eat," etc. Wünsche renders it: "*Und ihr werdet essen, essen und satt werden*." The Heb. often has the infin. absol. as the object complement of the finite verb, which sometimes follows and sometimes precedes it.

14 Ver. 27. — The וְ here indicates the logical consequence from what precedes.

EXEGETICAL.

The second part of this chapter is wholly occupied with promises to Judah. The first part, which is so full of menaces, had also revealed God's mercy in case of repentance, but only in a general way, affording only a glimmering of hope. Now, however, the promises given by Jehovah Himself flow forth like a full, broad stream. This transition occurs suddenly in ver. 18. The promise, which takes the form of an answer of God, is grounded upon a seeming change in the Divine purpose. A declaration so positive as this, introduced by the imper. consec., as an actual fact, of course implies that the condition on which the change in the Divine purpose was based, had been fulfilled, *i. e.*, that the day of fasting and prayer had been duly observed, and that the promise is God's answer to his people's penitential prayer. Our book, therefore, is in point of time divided into two parts, an earlier and a later one.

Ver. 18. **Then will the Lord**, etc. קִנֵּא with לְ = to be jealous for some one, *i. e.*, to be zealous for his welfare out of love for him.

Vers. 19, 20. Renewed fertility is promised by the removal of the cause of the desolation. **Behold I send you.** This carries us back to ch. i. 10, 11. שֹׁלֵחַ; because the growth of grain depends upon the fertilizing rain.

Ver. 20. הַצְּפוֹנִי, not the northern of the E. V. and other versions, for the locusts never invade Palestine from the North, but **the destroyer**. The word comes from צְפוֹן, the name of the well-known Egyptian god Typhon, from whence also comes the ὁ τυφωνικὸς (Acts xxvii. 14). [This is a fanciful and groundless rendering. The word occurs in one hundred and fifty other places in O. T., and in all of them its sense is clearly that given to it here by our E. V. The term הַצְּפוֹנִי, says Wünsche, according to the Masor. punctuation, can have no other sense than that of "northern," or "northerner." The allegorists use the word as a proof of their theory, that the Chaldeans, or Syrians are meant. But there is not, either in what precedes or in what follows, the slightest trace of a hostile invasion of Judah by either of these nations. The word, therefore, must refer to the locusts. Nor is the designation of them as "northern" an arbitrary one, since their movements were wholly dependent on the wind. — F.] **Into a land dry and desolate**, one in which this army will find nothing to destroy, but will itself perish. The land referred to is the desert of Arabia, on the southern border of Judæa. The two ways in which the locusts would be destroyed are mentioned: they would be driven into the desert, and into the sea. Two seas are named, in which this army should perish, namely, the vanguard in the east or Dead Sea, the rear in the west or Mediterranean. We need not, however, suppose that the destruction of these two divisions of the locust army occurred at the same time.

[**His stench.** Jerome says of the locusts of Palestine, when the shores of both seas were filled with heaps of dead locusts which the waters had cast up, their stench and putrefaction were so noxious as to corrupt the air, so that a pestilence was produced among men and beasts. The same fact is attested by many modern travellers. — F.]

Vers. 21–23. **Fear not, O Land.** As in ch. i. the land and its inhabitants were called upon to mourn in view of coming judgments, so now they are called upon to rejoice over the destruction of the hosts that had laid waste the country. Here, the address is that of the prophet; while in ver. 25 the Lord himself speaks. The subject and object of the joy are stated (ver. 21) in a general way. The latter is described in the words: **Jehovah hath done great things.** The perfect tense is here used like the German present, to denote an action, which being absolutely certain is thought of and presented as one already accomplished. What is here said of God's doings is not to be limited to that special time or occasion, but expresses a universal truth.

Ver. 22. Even the beasts of the field should no longer be afraid of wanting their supplies of food. The picture of blessing which begins with verdant pastures, ends with trees laden with fruit.

Ver. 23. Men are called upon to rejoice. **Children of Zion** may be taken in a general sense for the inhabitants of Judah, since Zion represented Judah. **The former or early rain.** It fell after autumn, and seems to be so called from יָרָה, *jecit*, because its season was *post jactam sementem*. It was the chief need after the devastation and drought, and hence is named with special emphasis. **The latter rain** fell about harvest, towards the end of April. Hence its name from לָקַשׁ, *collegit*, בָּרִאשׁוֹן corresponds to the אַחֲרֵיכֵן (iii. 1);

the material blessings first, then the spiritual. [Pusey: It may be, *at the first*, *i. e.*, as soon as ever it is needed, or in contrast to the more extensive gifts afterwards; or, *as at the first*, *i. e.*, all shall, upon their penitence, be restored as at the first. These lesser variations leave the sense of the whole the same, and all are supported by good authorities. It is still a reversal of the former sentence, that, whereas before the rivers of water were dried up, now the rains should come, each in his season. — F.] "The rain shall come down," here specially opposed to the drought, but, perhaps also a symbol of blessing in general. [So far as this special act may be generalized, it may rather be said that it begets and keeps alive the consciousness that the Giver of all good is again in the midst of his people. — F.]

Vers. 24–27. **And the threshing floors, — my people shall never be ashamed.**

The effects of the rain are first briefly, and then more fully described. **The years,** *i. e.*, the product of the years which the locusts had devoured. The plural form of the word does not imply that the visitations of the locusts described in ch. i. were in successive years; it only means that the results of a single visitation would be felt for several years, and that as long a time would be required to repair the mischief done by the locusts. The names of the four kinds of locusts given in ch. i. are repeated here, only that the generic name אַרְבֶּה holds a prominent place.

Vers. 26, 27. A beautiful conclusion; it treats of the redemption of Israel from the heathen, and thereby of the vindication of God himself. This is the fundamental idea that repeatedly recurs. This conclusion forms the point of transition to the new and higher promises in ch. iii., which fully display the truth that "Jehovah is in the midst of Israel, that He is their God and none else," and therefore that his people can never be put to shame. While this promise is in a negative form, it really includes much more than the literal sense of the words; it means that God's people shall not only not be ashamed, but that they shall be glorified forever, and that all the powers of this world that have opposed them shall be utterly confounded.

THEOLOGICAL.

The greatness of the promise shows the power and importance of repentance, and the magnitude of God's grace. It is a confirmation of what is said (ii. 12). The punishment God inflicts is converted into a blessing; his zeal against us is changed into zeal for us. God's dispensing blessing is the proof that He is in the midst of Israel; that Jehovah and none else is their God. Jehovah is in the midst of Israel, the centre and source of spiritual life. It is solely through Him, that Israel is what he is. The proof that God dwells with Israel is his blessing him; for the very object of his communion with Israel, and the choice of him to be his people, is to bless him. In dispensing blessings, God manifests his name, his power, his bounty, and distinguishes Himself from all false gods, who being dead cannot do that; while Israel being thus blessed is distinguished from the heathen, standing far above them who have no such God. Hence, too, the punishments inflicted upon Israel are in strong contrast with those which overtake the heathen. If Israel is unfaithful so that his God disowns him, it is quite natural that if he repents, he should regain the blessing; the honor of God and of his people require this. Upon this fact, repentant Israel grounds his prayer for pardon, and the promise given corresponds to the prayer. When God sends blessings to his people, whom his judgments have brought to repentance, the right way is, to rejoice in and enjoy them, with humble gratitude indeed, but at the same time with the confession that they come wholly from Him. Then, the humiliation endured will have produced its proper fruits.

HOMILETICAL.

Ver. 18. *And Jehovah was jealous for his people.* Penitential and believing prayer secures a gracious answer; sometimes in the way of warding off the temporal evils with which God visits men. Before we call, God will answer, and while we are speaking, He will hear.

[Henry: God will have an eye (1.) To his own honor, and the reputation of his covenant with Israel, by which He had conveyed to them that good land; now He will not suffer it to be despised or disparaged, but *will be jealous* for the land and its inhabitants, who had been praised as a *happy people*, and therefore must not lie open to reproach as a miserable people. (2.) To their distress. He will *pity his people*, and will restore them their former comforts.

Pusey: Before, God seemed set upon their destruction. It was his great army which was ready to destroy them; He was at their head giving the word. Now, He is full of tender love for them, which resents injuries done to them, as done to Himself. — F.]

Ver. 19. *I will send — corn.* It is God who averts the failure of crops, and scarcity of food. These evils neither come nor cease by accident. God gives us our daily bread. He opens his hand, and we are satisfied with food.

Ver. 20. *I will remove the northern.* When God has alarmed his people and brought them to repentance, He often pours out his wrath upon those who were his instruments in the infliction of chastisement.

Ver. 21. *Fear not.* How kindly God can speak to the heart! How powerfully can He console! It is easy for Him to do great things.

[Pusey: Before, they were bidden to tremble; now they are bidden *fear not*. The enemy had *done great things;* now, the cause of joy is, that God had *done great things;* the almightiness of God overwhelming and sweeping over the might put forth to destroy. — F.]

Ver. 23. *Rejoice in the Lord.* Joy in God is the right kind of joy. From Him comes every blessing. Yet how often do we receive joyfully enough the gift, without rejoicing in the Giver? Certainly he who does not know God, cannot rejoice in Him.

[Scott: The sons of Zion can never have so great a cause to fear, but they must still have a greater to "rejoice in the Lord." He gives us all our comforts, and enables us to use them with thankful hearts. The wisdom, truth, and love of his dispensations toward us deserve our highest admiration; and He will never leave his people to be ashamed of their confidence in Him. — F.]

Ver. 25. *I will restore.* How great is the bounty of God! It seems as if He were anxious to repair some injury which his preceding judgments had caused.

Ver. 26. *Ye shall be satisfied.* What a blessed result of humiliation when our being satisfied and

praising the Lord become and remain so united in us, that we can never again misuse God's gifts to feed vain conceit, luxury, tyranny, but shall maintain unmoved fear, love, and trust in God.

[PUSEY: It is of the punishment of God when men eat and are *not* satisfied; it is man's sin that they are satisfied and do not praise God, but the more forget Him. And so God's blessings become a curse to him. God promises to restore his gifts, and to give grace withal, that they should own and thank Him. — F.]

Ver. 27. *I am in the midst of Israel.* Blessed is the people in the midst of whom the Lord dwells. Every fresh blessing should be a proof to us that God is in the midst of us. But we must be God's people, if we would hope to have Him dwelling in the midst of us. He is only in the midst of Israel. God's people can never be put to shame; therefore let us see that we belong to them.

[HENRY: We should labor to grow in our acquaintance with God by all providences, both merciful and afflictive. When God gives to his people plenty and peace, He thereby gives them to understand that He is pleased with their repentance, that He has pardoned their sins. — F.]

SECTION II.

Hereafter, on "the Day of the Lord," the Enemies of Israel shall be destroyed, while the Lord reigns in Zion guarding and blessing it.

CHAPTER II. 28–32.

[In the Hebrew text and in Schmoller, these verses form Chap. III., while Chap. III. of E. V. is numbered Chap. IV. We prefer to keep the order of the E. V. — F.]

The promise, which up to this point has reference to the present and the near future, now takes a higher and wider range. It brings into view the day of the Lord, the result of the coming of which shall be, on the one hand, the overthrow of the world-power, and on the other, the full blessedness of God's people, through his dwelling in the midst of them. Ch. ii. 28–32 may be regarded as the introduction to the closing chapter, which describes the fulfillment of the promise. The grand events, which are the harbingers of the coming of the day of the Lord, are described. Zion is pointed out as the only place of safety; but even amid the terrors of that day, God's people will have no reason to fear. The third chapter describes the judgments to be inflicted upon the enemies of God's people, while the latter shall receive the richest blessings from the Lord, who sits enthroned on Zion.

28 And it shall come to pass afterward,[1]
That I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
And your sons and daughters shall prophesy;
Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions;

29 Even [2] upon the men servants and the maid servants,
In those days, will I pour out my spirit.
30 And I will give signs [3] in heaven and on earth,
Blood, and fire, and columns of smoke;
31 The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.

32 And it shall come to pass that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved.
For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance,
As Jehovah hath said;
Even among the remnant [4] whom Jehovah shall call.

CRITICAL AND TEXTUAL.

1 Ver. 28. — "*Afterward.*" אַחֲרֵי־כֵן is clearly identical with the formula used by the later prophets. בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים, "the last days."

2 Ver. 29. — "*Even.*" The "also" of E. V. hardly expresses the emphasis of גַּם.

3 Ver. 30. — "*Signs.*" מוֹפְתִים denotes not "signs," but rather prodigies, miraculous signs of coming events.

4 Ver. 32. — "*Remnant.*" פְּלֵיטָה properly means "deliverance, escape." Here the abst. is used for the conc. Schmoller and Wünsche render "the escaped."

EXEGETICAL.

Ver. 28. **And it shall come to pass,** etc. What is here said of a general outpouring of the Spirit, while connected with the foregoing promise, holds out to Israel the prospect of a grander dispensation of divine grace and of richer blessings than those promised in the preceding chapter. God will manifest Himself in such a manner as He has never done before. But this outpouring of the Spirit is viewed by the prophet as connected with the great day of the Lord, and as a sign of its coming. But he thus views it only because he sees in that day, a day of judgment on Israel's enemies, and a day of salvation to Israel, through God's dwelling in Zion. If vers. 28, 29 be considered as containing a new promise, ver. 30 would begin a new subject, which would be contrary to the tenor of the prophet's discourse, as it is evident that these verses are closely connected.

Ver. 28. **Afterward,** *i. e.*, after what had been before announced in ver. 23; it is more indefinite than the **last days,** although, in general, the meaning is the same. Joel apparently imagines that the events which he here describes, will happen in no very distant future. שָׁפַךְ, **to pour,** primarily refers to rain, or a heavy shower of rain; it here denotes the communicating of something from above, and in great abundance. This last idea is illustrated in the extent of the gift, — to "all flesh," and the nature of the gift, — the spirit of prophecy in various forms. הַבָּשָׂר־רוּחַ. In contrast with God, to whom the רוּחַ belongs, *κατ. ἐξ.*, man appears as בָּשָׂר "flesh." This term designates man not simply as a being in want of this "Spirit," but also as one naturally fitted to receive it, just as the dry ground is fitted to receive the rain. — **All flesh.** How is this general expression to be understood? It is clear from what follows that there is no limitation of sex, age, or condition, and that not merely particular individuals, but that all are to share in this divine gift, — a fulfillment of the wish of Moses (Num. xi. 29). The connection and the train of thought require us to extend the "all" to mankind generally. — **Shall prophesy.** This is explained by "prophesying," "dreaming dreams," "seeing visions." In this enumeration the most important thing comes first, *i. e.*, the proper prophetic function or power. נִבָּא means, not simply to predict future events, but generally to announce the revelations of God. The whole people will be the vehicle through which these highest spiritual utterances will be made, and as all barriers will be then broken down, woman is named by the side of man. To this prophesying are conjoined, in a sort of secondary way, other modes of divine manifestation, "dreams," "visions." As there is to be no difference of sex, so there is to be none of age, in regard to the sharing of this spirit. Even those who would seem to be unfitted for it shall receive it — "old men and children." Why, it may be asked, shall "old men dream dreams?" Because they are better fitted for "dreams," just as young men, or children are for "visions," though the reverse of this would seem to be more natural. But the condition of things predicted by the prophet would be every way extraordinary. — **And the servants.** This is added as something very singular, וְגַם "and even." Nay, something unheard of shall then happen, namely, that slaves as well as freemen shall partake of this Spirit. In other words, this social distinction shall then be abolished. The Jewish interpreters could scarcely comprehend how this could be, and hence the Sept. make the servants and hand-maidens, "God's," ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους καὶ τὰς δούλας μου; so too Acts ii. 16.

Ver. 30. **I will show wonders.** What shall be the form of these phenomena of nature? It is idle to try to answer the question. They are evidently such as had never before been seen, though they may somewhat resemble the plagues of Egypt. There will be "blood" and "fire," and "pillars of smoke." The color of blood appears in the moon; both sun and moon are obscured; and there are signs of a hiding of the face of God who rules in heaven, and consequently of his anger. These signs will be of a nature to awaken terror, and all the more, as the day approaches, for it would seem from vers. 28, 29, 30, that there will be hardly an interval between the sign and the day. Its menacing aspect becomes so much the more prominent inasmuch as God will then manifest Himself, not merely in a general way, but as bringing on a special crisis. The obscuration of the stars is often mentioned in connection with the day of judgment (Ezek. xxxii. 7; Am. viii. 9; Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24; Luke xxi. 25). **Before the day of the Lord come.** Hence these appearances are signs of the coming of this day. Its actual coming and its importance are set forth in ch. iii.; here it is described only in a general way. Ver. 32 goes on to state that for Zion it will bring neither judgment nor destruction. . Here its tempest will cease. But there is, at the same time, an implied exhortation to comply with the condition of safety.

Ver. 32. **And it shall come to pass, — whom the Lord shall call.** To call on the name of Jehovah is to confess Him, to worship Him who has revealed, and is revealing Himself to Israel. **Whosoever,** כֹּל with a special emphasis, to teach that the day of the Lord will not bring destruction to all, though it may have that look. There will be complete deliverance to those who call on the name of the Lord, and to none else. The reason is given, because in Mt. Zion is "deliverance." **As Jehovah had said.** This seems to point to some positive prophetic promise. This divine promise of safety to all who call on the name of the Lord, based on the promise concerning Zion and Jerusalem, shows how closely related were these two places. They are set forth as the place where the Lord dwelt in his sanctuary with his people, and where his name is known. The calling on the Lord is wholly confined to Zion and Jerusalem, though it would be of no avail to any one to be in Zion unless he called on the Lord. **Deliverance.** Many take this term in a concrete and collective sense, *i. e.*, "the delivered," but the other is the more natural interpretation. **The remnant,** or "the escaped;" there shall be among them those whom the Lord calls. שָׂרִיד is one who has escaped from the field of battle, or one who has been saved from the fate of most others, and so implying that the number is small. This "remnant" is evidently to be added as a new class to those before mentioned as delivered by calling on the name of the Lord, the idea being that they had been overtaken by the calamity, and though delivered, their escape had been a very narrow one, and hence noticed as the result of the Lord's special and merciful call. **Who are they?** Not those

already in Zion and Jerusalem; but those who were called to come there, *i. e.*, not to these localities merely, but to communion with the God who calls and who is enthroned in Zion. This manifestly means that some of those who would be properly liable to the judgment, would escape it and share in the salvation promised to Zion. Who are they? Not the inhabitants of Judah living outside the walls of Jerusalem; — a sense of the words entirely too limited and local. Besides, Zion and Jerusalem must be taken as including all the inhabitants of Judah wherever resident. It may, perhaps, be inferred from ch. iii. that they are the Israelites scattered among the nations, whom the Lord promises (iii. 16) to bring again. Yet they can scarcely be described as the "remnant," or the "escaped," since their deliverance is the very object of the judgment which falls upon the heathen world. Why not understand by the "remnant," the heathen? They are both far off, and liable to the judgment. It would still be true that while the heathen world in general will be the object of the judgment in the day of the Lord, some of them will escape through the mercy of Jehovah. This is certainly only a faint indication of the calling of the Gentiles. This last fact is not distinctly announced, the heathen as such not having been as yet named. There is a close resemblance between ver. 32 and Ob. 17, so that if the latter was the earlier prophet, we might suppose that his words had been modified by Joel. Obadiah says, "there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau," in the day of the Lord. Joel also says, that this day shall be one of judgment to all outside of Zion, for all the heathen. But he does not mean that none of them shall escape, for he admits it to be possible that Jehovah might call some of them. Joel thus takes a step in advance of Obadiah, and indicates, though it may be obscurely, the work that should be done by later prophets.

[Pusey: Ver. 28. *All flesh* is the name for all mankind. The words *all flesh* are in the Pentateuch, and in one place in Daniel, used in a yet wider sense, of everything which has life; but, in no one case, in any narrower sense. It does not include every individual in the race, but it includes the whole race, and individuals throughout it, in every nation, sex, or condition, Jew or Gentile, Greek or Barbarian, *i. e.*, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, bond or free, male or female. On all was to be poured the Holy Spirit. — Ver. 29. St. Peter, in declaring that these words began to be fulfilled in the day of Pentecost, quotes them with two lesser differences: "I will pour out *of* my Spirit and upon *My* servants and *My* handmaidens." The words declare something in addition, but do not alter the meaning, and so St. Peter quotes them as they lay in the Greek, which, probably, was the language known by most of the mixed multitude to whom he spake. The words "My Spirit," express the largeness and fullness of the gift. The words "of my Spirit," express, in part, that He who is infinite cannot be contained by us who are finite. The words "the servants," mark the outward condition. The words "my servants," declare that there should be no difference between bond and free.

Ver. 32. *Call upon the name of the Lord.* To call on the name of the Lord is to worship Him as He is, depending upon Him. The name of the Lord expresses his true Being, that which He is. For the name rendered, The Lord, expresses that He is: and that He alone is, the self-same the unchangeable; the name rendered God is not the special name of God. — F.]

[Wünsche: Ver. 28. *My Spirit.* The Spirit of God is the divine analogue of the spirit of man. It is the true life principle of men; the source of physical life in the world of nature, of spiritual life in the sphere of religion, of all goodness, truth, rectitude, and beauty. Whatever the human mind thinks, feels, wills, fashions, in regard to any one of these objects is, in one sense, an outflow of the Divine Spirit. The prayer that ascends to heaven from a devout heart, the self consecration, the holy enthusiasm which distinguished the prophets, and fitted them to proclaim to the people God's judgment and his mercy, — all these are expressions and gifts of the Divine Spirit. *All flesh.* The word is used in Heb. to denote the totality of living being on earth, beasts and men (Gen. vi. 13; vii. 15, etc.); and then in a more limited sense, for the human race. The connection shows that, here, it is taken in the latter sense. Credner, however, gives it the wider meaning so as to include the irrational animals, and refers in confirmation of his view to the prediction of Isaiah xi. 6–9, concerning the "wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid," etc. But this friendly union of wild and tame animals is not represented by the prophet as the result of men's enlarged knowledge of God. Man alone is the image of God; he alone is a fit organ of the Divine Spirit; he alone has the capacity to receive the gift here described, which, therefore, cannot be extended to the lower forms of animal life.

Ver. 32. *As Jehovah hath said.* There is no reference here to a lost prophecy (Meier); nor to an older writing of Joel (Ewald); nor to Obadiah (Keil). The meaning simply is that Joel, the person speaking, had a divine revelation of the fact, that where God's throne is, there his true worshippers shall also be. *Shall call.* The word has a pregnant sense, conveying the idea that the "deliverance" depends not on the worshippers of God alone, but also upon God himself. Only those whom the Lord calls or chooses, and who call upon or choose Him shall be saved. Most of the older and later expositors take "call" in a predestinative sense. The Chald. has *quos dominus destinat.* — F.]

THEOLOGICAL.

1. From the very first the prophets point to a great decisive Hereafter. In their being able to do this lay their strength. Living in the present, their eyes were ever turned to the future, or rather the end, the consummation of all things. Hence the power of their exhortations and promises to their contemporaries. Their influence would have been very frail and feeble, if they had not had a firm faith in a future, when the salvation of God should be fully realized.

2. Outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all flesh. It is evident from the context that the prophet himself did not suppose that this "outpouring" would extend beyond the people of Israel. This was its field (ver. 27). Here God will reveal Himself; here in the day of the Lord the judgment will take place, here all nations shall be gathered. The whole of ch. iii. shows that the prophet considered the heathen world as the enemy of God's people. He does not put the heathen on the same footing with Israel, but on the contrary he directs attention exclusively to the high position of Israel as God's people. It presupposes

the conversion of the heathen, and their reception among God's people. As he nowhere predicts such a conversion, his promise of an outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh cannot here include the heathen; even if we refer the phrase "whom the Lord shall call," to a selection of the heathen, it is all the more evident that the "all flesh" cannot include them. For the calling of individual heathen could not have the same prominence that would belong to the out-pouring of the Spirit on the whole heathen world. Joel might have assumed that some called out of the heathen world would partake of the blessing given to Israel. To Israel the promise was of something not only great but new, namely, the impartation of the Spirit to persons of all ages and conditions. Pouring out as a symbol of this impartation was never before used to denote the gift of the Spirit. Thus far only individuals in particular localities had received it. The gift was, indeed, a necessary result of the covenant relation in which Jehovah stood to Israel, but hitherto his Spirit had come only on individuals, fitting them to become divine messengers. Such a limitation, however, did not accord with the true idea of God's people, which implies that they should all be partakers of his Spirit. This should be fully realized in the future. Every barrier shall be broken down, and the reception of this Spirit shall be limited neither by age, sex, nor condition. It would come in the form of prophetic dreams and visions, giving those who received it a deeper insight into divine things, and make them organs of divine revelation.

This promise, as given by the prophet, is twofold. On the one hand, it will thus be seen that Jehovah is in the midst of Israel. On the other hand, this general outpouring of the Spirit will be a preparatory warning of the coming of the day of the Lord. That day will be one of immediate and decisive manifestation of God, and its approach will be heralded by new and startling events fitted to excite in the minds of men eager expectation, and to rouse them to seek salvation before it was too late. These warnings may consist of extraordinary phenomena in the world of nature, or of similar phenomena in the sphere of mind. From the spirituality of the religion of Jehovah we might expect that occurrences of the latter class would predominate. Perhaps we may go farther and say that the object of these remarkable events, of this prophesying, of these dreams and visions, is the day of the Lord itself. It is clear that by this general outpouring of the Spirit the way would be prepared for such a result of the day of the Lord as must redound to the glory of Israel. Since Jehovah thus recognizes Israel as his people, by making them all individually organs of his revelation, He must, while blessing them, resist and punish their enemies. This double aspect of the day of the Lord, as one of judgment, and of redemption, is here very distinctly declared. The deliverance of individuals will not come to them as a matter of course. If they escape the terrors of that day, and share in the salvation of God's people, it can only be by their complying with the conditions on which it is secured.

When shall this promise of a general outpouring of the Spirit be fulfilled? From the phrase "after this," the prophet seems to have regarded it as connected with the promise given in the earlier part of the chapter. But it does not follow that he looked upon it as near at hand. The prophets often connect promises relating to the present, very closely with those pertaining to the far distant future. In this respect Joel and the later prophets agree. The latter represent the gift of the Spirit in its fullness to the covenant people, as a prominent feature of the Messianic age, or of the New Covenant. Jer. xxxii. 15; lvi. 13; Ez. xxxvi. 26; Zech. xii. 10. Hence we should, perhaps, designate this prophecy as in a general way Messianic, though Joel does not speak directly of the Messiah, and we should look for its fulfillment after the advent of Messiah. Thus St. Peter (Acts ii. 17) saw its accomplishment in the miracle of Pentecost. He expressly refers the אַחֲרֵי־כֵן — ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις, to the Messianic age. He distinctly recognizes the Messiah as the mediator through whom this rich and general bestowment of the Spirit should come. Like the prophet, he understood the "all flesh," to mean, in the first instance, the covenant people, though he declares that the promise extended also to those who were "afar off." Joel only intimates that the latter will escape, but does not say, in so many words, that the Spirit will be given to them. Peter evidently regarded — as Joel did — this outpouring of the Spirit as a sign of the Day of the Lord, *i.e.*, in the New Testament sense of the term, as a day of Parousia, and so quotes vers. 28–32. As he saw one part of the prediction accomplished, he naturally looked for the fulfillment of the other. There can be no doubt that the Apostles, at least for a time, thought that the Παρουσία, or the Coming of the Lord, was nigh at hand, and such prophecies as the one before us, would tend to confirm them in that expectation. On the day of Pentecost, Peter saw the Spirit poured out, not indeed on "all flesh," even in the limited sense of all Israel, but he was sure that the promise of it embraced the whole covenant people, and so he opens to all the prospect of the gift, on condition of repentance.

But though the wonders of Pentecost were the first and literal fulfillment of this prophecy, they by no means exhausted its meaning. The only effect of the outpouring of the Spirit recognized by Joel, is the prophetic, and on this memorable day, it certainly appeared in an ecstatic form. But we need only to look into the Epistles of St. Paul to discover that the influence of the πνεῦμα ἅγιον which Christ gives is not exhausted by such results; on the contrary, the grandest effect of it is the regeneration of the whole man. This deeper, ethico-religious conception of the gift of the Spirit, founded on the declarations of the later prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, is certainly the New Testament one. Joel's idea of the close connection between the outpouring of the Spirit and "the day," is in one sense a mistaken one, since the "outpouring" came, but not the "day," yet in another view it is perfectly correct. The two are most nearly related. With Messiah have come the ἔσχαται ἡμέραι; and the gift of the Spirit is, and will continue to be, a sign of the Day of the Lord, a proof that God is in the midst of his people, and will give them the victory over all their enemies. — Finally, we must not overlook the limits of the field of the Spirit's operations as described by Hosea. He, indeed, considered Israel alone as God's people, and that on Israel alone would the Spirit be poured out. But as we know from the New Testament that Christ's disciples are not limited to Israel, neither are God's people, so we are sure that this outpouring of the Spirit is confined to them, *i. e.*, to the spiritual Israel, to all who, by faith, are made one with Christ. All such partake of the Holy Ghost.

[In this somewhat prolix and verbose dissertation, the author confounds two quite distinct questions, namely, What is the real meaning of the prophecy — whom does it embrace, — and when and how will it be completely fulfilled? and How far did Joel comprehend the real purport of the prophetic promises, which he was inspired to utter? This last question it is impossible to answer, because Joel has left no explanation of his prediction. We have nothing but the prophecy itself. Therefore we have no means of determining whether he took the "all flesh," as meaning simply Israel, or in its wider sense. After all, the question is one of no practical importance. The grand inquiry is. What is the meaning of the prophecy? — F.

WÜNSCHE: Credner is clearly wrong when he says that Peter made a false application of this prophecy. No man can deny that on the day of Pentecost, the prediction of Joel began to be accomplished. We say designedly, "began to be accomplished," for although the Christian Church has been growing in divine knowledge, and has been working for the common good of all sexes, ages, and classes, more than eighteen hundred years since that day, the prophecy is not yet fulfilled. There are predictions, which have found their fulfillment in particular historical events; and there are others which embrace the entire field of humanity, and Joel's belongs to this latter class. Its complete accomplishment will be the history of the kingdom of God on earth, down to the end of time. — F.]

3. Let us now consider what the prophet teaches in regard to the condition of deliverance, in this "terrible day of the Lord." It is not sharing in those extraordinary influences of the Spirit, whose results are involuntary, but "calling on the name of the Lord," a free act, which every one who pleases can perform. There is something to be done by each individual for himself, and all are exhorted to do it. Spiritual gifts do not necessarily involve spiritual regeneration. So we find to have been the case in New Testament history, with the miraculous χαρίσματα, which at first predominated, but gradually disappeared, giving place to a more natural and tranquil, a purer and deeper spiritual life. The condition of deliverance is stated in ver. 32, and all are exhorted to fulfill it. External membership with the people of Israel will not, of itself, secure salvation; but the condition is one so simple and easy, so really within the power of every one, that the verse has more the aspect of a promise than an exhortation. There is no real need that any one should be afraid of the coming of the "terrible day." Its terrors may be escaped by simply calling on the Lord in Zion and Jerusalem, the place of worship. Therefore no one need ask, Where shall I find the Lord on whom I must call? for the Lord Himself has named the place of his abode.

This alone is necessary, "to call on the Lord." To do this, it is not absolutely requisite that one should belong to Israel. This is plainly taught by the words just quoted. Hence Paul bases upon them the equal rights of Jews and Gentiles? But does this exposition suit the context, in which the prophet so expressly connects the deliverance with Zion and Jerusalem? If we look carefully into the matter, we shall find that it does. Zion is the place where God has revealed Himself. Without such a revelation as that made in Zion, neither calling on the Lord, nor salvation, would have been possible. Zion then (not in the local sense) is the seat and centre of salvation; because here God has manifested Himself. Paul knew that a Greek, simply as such, could not call upon the Lord, since he did not even know the Lord who had revealed Himself in Israel. Those who would call upon Him, as Paul teaches, must believe in Him, and this implies that He had been preached to them, and this was done by those who made known to the heathen the God who has manifested Himself in Zion. Paul denies that conformity to the Jewish law is a condition of salvation. All this shows the Apostle's deep insight into the real meaning of Scripture. His heart beat for those afar off; he feels, and discovers instinctively, that the barriers which had separated Jew and Gentile were broken down by the very prophetic word which made salvation dependent on one thing alone, a thing within the reach equally of the Gentile and the Jew. He evidently took the words "whosoever shall call," etc., in a sense large enough to embrace the whole Gentile world. On exegetical grounds, as we have seen, we are authorized though not compelled to give them this breadth of meaning. In the last clause of ver. 32 the phrase occurs, "whom the Lord shall call," and it conveys the idea that salvation is not a matter of right, but of grace alone. With regard to all who are afar off this divine call is the cause of deliverance. If they had not been thus called they must certainly have perished, so that they owe their escape solely to the gracious call of God. But it is at the same time clearly implied that this call becomes effective and saving only when the man himself turns to the Lord.

HOMILETICAL.

Ver. 28. *Afterward.* A prophetic word of profound meaning. When? The prophets themselves did not know. Yet these promises were, for the present, a light shining in a dark place. But what kings and prophets of old desired to see and saw not, we see, who live in the times of fulfillment. To us the Afterward has become Now. To many, it is only a Once, a Formerly. They forget that the fulfillment of these prophetic words never grows old, but has a perpetual Now, which it becomes us to comprehend and improve until the Lord comes. For as that Afterward has become a Now, in Him in whom all the promises are yea and amen, so He still points us to a more distant Afterward, when there will be nothing new in distinction from the old, except as sight is distinguished from faith, and the end from the beginning.

I will pour out my Spirit. True fellowship with God implies the participation of the Spirit of God. So long as this privilege is confined to individual communion with God, on the part of men, it must be simply an object of desire and hope, notwithstanding the means used to extend it. Blessed privilege of the New Covenant, that in Christ every one may receive the Spirit of God. All special privileges are done away; all separating walls are broken down. The lowest as well as the loftiest can now aspire to be taught by the Spirit of God, and so to become a co-worker with God. How wonderful the condescension and the grace of God! (See Gal. iii. 28.) How plain is it that the religion of the Old Testament, though itself far from attaining this end, foreshadowed it, and revealed the way to it.

[HENRY: God hath reserved some better things for us, the kingdom of grace, and the kingdom of

glory, and the happiness of true believers in both. We often read in the Old Testament of the Spirit of the Lord coming like drops, as it were, upon the judges and prophets whom God raised up for extraordinary services, but now, the Spirit shall be poured out plentifully, in a full stream.

PUSEY: God alone can be poured out into the soul, so as to possess it, enlighten it, teach, kindle, bend, move it as He wills, sanctify, satiate, fill it. The prophetic word circles round to that wherewith it began, the all-containing promise of the large outpouring of the Spirit of God; and that, upon those whom the carnal Jews at all times would least expect to receive it. It began with including the heathen; it instances individual gifts, and then it ends by resting on the slaves. The order of the words is significant. He begins *I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh*, and then in order to leave the mind resting on these same great words, He inverts the order and ends, *and upon the servants*, etc. It leaves the thoughts resting on the great words "*I will pour out my Spirit.*"

ROBINSON: A Christian even now, animated and influenced by the Holy Ghost is a wonderful being, as superior to the rest of mankind, as man is superior to the beasts of the field. But what will he be then? There have been mighty men amongst us, a Milton, a Boyle, a Newton in a former age, and some in the present, who, with the highest gifts of genius, have been endowed with eminent gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; but who shall say in that future dispensation, to what heights of wisdom and knowledge and power man may be advanced? Every discovery in science, every progressive improvement, such as the present age has developed, are prophecies and earnests of that glorious time here promised. — F.]

Ver. 30. *Show wonders.* The New Covenant has brought salvation, but it also brings sifting judgments corresponding to the greatness of this salvation. The question now is, how men will deal with it; and most certain is it that God will remove everything opposed to Him and his kingdom. Hence, with the salvation in Christ, there was need of this last separating judgment. Great displays of God's grace and great judgments often go together, the latter preparing the way for the former. So was it in Jerusalem. Those who despised the kindly tongues of flame on the day of Pentecost, had blood, fire, and vapor of smoke as the symbols of destruction. So is it now. Those who quench the Spirit, despise prophesyings, and give themselves up to the flesh and the world will find "that day" all the more terrible, and that their damnation slumbereth not. The best thing is to be always ready for that day of God. If we delay until it actually comes, it may be too late.

[HENRY: The judgments of God upon a sinful world, and the frequent destruction of wicked kingdoms by fire and sword, are prefaces to and presages of the judgment of the world in the last day.

PUSEY: Each revelation of God prepares the way for another, until that last revelation of his love and of his wrath in the great day. — F.]

Ver. 32. *Whosoever calleth.* Happy they who are found watching and praying when the Lord comes. We may escape the judgment, therefore we should not despair. All that is necessary is believing prayer to God. For every one who confesses God, He will confess. But such escape we must earnestly seek for ourselves. The coming of Christ has two aspects; to the godless, it will be a day of condemnation and wrath: to believers, a day of redemption and refreshing. In *Zion* and *Jerusalem, i. e.*, in the God who is there revealed, is redemption. He who believes in Christ is in Zion, for he confesses Him as the God of Zion. To Him belongs the glory of our salvation. Examine thyself to see thy real condition. The ability to stand in the judgment will come, not from any outward excellence, nor even from gracious privileges or preëminence. *The remnant.* God desires not to destroy, but to save. Hence his constant and gracious call to all who are afar off, to come and be saved. Even the heathen, who belong not to his chosen people, can obtain salvation. Not indeed unless He calls them; but if He does call and they yield to it through his grace, they share in the gifts of his people. Art thou among the called ones of God? Hast thou heard his call? Thou mayest be called and yet perish at last. Many are called, few chosen. God calls all, but He, in turn, will be called upon in faith.

[HENRY: This is ground of comfort and hope to sinners, that whatever danger there is in their case, there is also deliverance for them, if it be not their own fault. And if we would share in this deliverance we must apply ourselves to the Gospel Zion, to God's Jerusalem. It is the *praying* remnant that shall be the *saved* remnant. And it will aggravate the ruin of those who perish, that they might have been saved on such easy terms. Those only shall be delivered in the great day that are now effectually called from sin to God, from self to Christ, from things below to things above.

SCOTT: The Gospel calls men in general to partake of its blessings, and of that salvation which is revealed and placed in the Church; and "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord" Jesus, as the Son of God and the Saviour of sinners, shall be delivered from the wrath to come. This is the happy case of that remnant of every age and people whom the Lord calls by his regenerating Spirit; all things shall work together for their good; they may look forward with comfort for the day, when nature shall expire in convulsions, assured that then their eternal redemption shall be perfected. — F.]

SECTION III.

The Day of the Lord brings full Salvation to Israel and the Destruction of his Enemies.

CHAPTER III.

1 For behold, in those days,[1] and at that time
When I shall bring again the captivity[2] of Judah and Jerusalem;

2 That I will gather all the nations,
And will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat;
And there will I deal with (or judge) them,[2] for my people, and my heritage,[3] Israel.
Because they scattered them among the nations,[4]
And divided my land.

3 And they cast lots for my people,
They bartered a boy for a harlot,
And sold a maiden for wine,[5] and drank it.

4 And, also, what have ye to do with me, Tyre and Sidon,
And all the borders[6] of Philistia?
Would you retaliate[7] upon me,
Or render me a recompense?
Soon and swiftly[8] will I bring your recompense on your own head.

5 Because ye have taken away my silver and my gold,
And have brought into your temples my goodly desirable things,[9]

6 And ye have sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the sons of Javan,
That ye might remove them far away from their border.

7 Behold, I will raise[10] them up out of the place where ye have sold them,
And will return your retaliation on your own head.

8 And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hands of the sons of Judah,
And they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a distant nation,
For Jehovah hath spoken it.

9 Proclaim this among the nations,
Declare (sanctify) a war,
Arouse the mighty ones,
Let all the men of war draw near, come up.

10 Beat your mattocks[11] into swords,
And your pruning-hooks into spears,
Let the weak say, I am strong.

11 Hasten[12] and come,
All ye nations round about, and assemble yourselves;
Then Jehovah shall bring down[13] thy mighty ones.

12 Let the nations arise and come up
To the valley of Jehoshaphat,
For there will I sit to judge all the nations round about.

13 Put in the sickle,[14]
For the harvest is ripe;
Come, tread,
For the wine-press is full,
The vats overflow,
For their wickedness is great.

14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision,
For the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision.

15 The sun and the moon are darkened,
And the stars withdraw their shining,

16 And[15] Jehovah will thunder out of Zion,
And from Jerusalem he will give forth his voice,
So that the heavens and the earth shall shake;
But Jehovah will be a refuge for his people,
And a stronghold for the sons of Israel.

17 And ye shall know that I Jehovah am your God,
Dwelling in Zion my holy mountain;

And Jerusalem shall be holy,
And strangers shall no more pass through her.

18 And it shall come to pass that in that day the mountains shall drop down with new wine,
And the hills shall flow with milk,
And all the river beds of Judah shall be full of water,

And a fountain shall flow forth from the house of Jehovah,
And shall water the valley of Shittim.

19 Egypt shall be a desolation,
And Edom shall be a desolate wilderness,
For their violence against Judah's sons;
Because they shed blood in their land.

20 But Judah shall dwell [16] forever,
And Jerusalem from generation to generation;

21 And I will avenge their blood, *which* I have not avenged,
And Jehovah will dwell in Zion.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — *Those days*, *i. e.*, preëminently. In Heb. the personal and demonstrative pronouns sometimes take the article, thus rendering the expression all the stronger and more emphatic.

2 Ver. 2. — וְנִשְׁפַּטְתִּי. For the construction see Josh. iv. 2; 2 Chron. xxii. 8; Is. iii. 14; Ezek. xxxviii. 22. In the latter place אֵת is used for עִם.

3 Ver. 2. — וְנַחֲלָתִי, my *peculium*. The word expresses more than עַמִּי, my people. Israel is in apposition with both terms.

4 Ver. 2. — *The nations*, *i. e.*, the neighboring ones. See ver. 12.

5 Ver. 3. — *For wine*. ב is here the ב of price, and according to the rule is placed after verbs of buying and selling.

6 Ver. 4. — *Borders*, גְּלִילוֹת, lit., circles, referring to the five subdivisions of Philistia, namely, Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkalon, Gath, and Ekron.

7 Ver. 4. — *Would you retaliate*. Wünsche renders the clause, "*Wolht ihr ein Thun mir vergelten*," and adds that it is variously explained. The meaning depends on the sense attached to גָּמַל. The ground sense of its radical syllable גם is fullness, accumulation. The primary meaning of גָּמַל is the same. It is used — (1) *Intrans.*, to be full, or complete, specially of fruit, to be ripe. (2) *Trans.*, to complete, to make full, *i. e.*: (a) To wean, or to take from milk (Gen. xxi. 8; 1 Sam. xxii. 24; Is. xxviii. 9. (b) To ripen with special reference to fruit. (c) To do something with the hands, *i. e.*, to finish it. (d) To recompense what has been done by another, so that its end and aim is accomplished, — something done, in a moral sense, for which men are responsible. It is construed both with לְ and עַל.

8 Ver. 4. — *Soon and swiftly*. See Is. v. 26. Pocock takes both the words adverbially.

9 Ver. 5. — *Goodly desirable things*. Newcome renders the phrase *desirable and goodly*. הַטּוֹבִים = not simply "good things," but "good" in a pregnant sense, *optima*.

10 Ver. 7. — *I will raise*. מְעִירָם. Hiph. of the intrans. עוּר, to be hot, hence to be watchful. One Kenn. MSS. has מְעִידָם, I am calling, or will call them as witnesses.

11 Ver. 10. — *Mattocks*. אִתֵּיכֶם. This was an instrument of husbandry having an edge that needed to be sharpened from time to time (1 Sam. xxii. 20). All the older versions render it "ploughshares," which Tregelles favors.

12 Ver. 11. — עוּשׁוּ, a ἅπαξ λεγ. perhaps used for חוּשׁוּ or אוּצוּ. The Sept. renders it *συναθροίζεσθε*. Vulg. *erumpite*; Gesen., Meier, and others, "hasten." For the use of the וְ to show the close connection between the two imperatives, see Mic. iv. 13. Kimchi, Ewald, Meier, and others take the following וְנִקְבָּצוּ as an anom. Niphal imperative for הִקָּבְצוּ.

13 *Shall bring down*, lit., "hath brought down." What He will do is spoken of as done.

14 Ver. 13. — מַגָּל, the sickle, from the root נָגַל; hence the dag. fort.

15 Ver. 16. — *But Jehovah*. וְ is here clearly antithetic.

16 Ver. 20. — תֵּשֵׁב is not to be understood in a passive sense, "*habitari*," but actively, *i. e.*, shall dwell in and possess the land.

EXEGETICAL.

Vers. 1–3. **For behold in those days**, etc. The כִּי in ver. 1 gives the reason for the thought that deliverance can be found only in Zion, in the day of the Lord, for then shall all heathen nations be judged. *In those days*, *i. e.*, the days that shall come, the "afterward" of the previous chapter. The signs of the event belong essentially to the event itself; but the time is more exactly determined by the statement "when I shall bring again," etc. This distinctly shows that the object of the day of the Lord is, the deliverance of the people of God. The judgment of the heathen world is simply a means to that end. **Bring back the captivity**, or to return the captivity, means to make an end of it. This phrase, from the use here made of it to designate the epoch of judgment as a *terminus technicus* for a *restitutio in integrum* promised to God's people, may have been borrowed from some more ancient prophecy. The condition out of which the captivity is brought appears from the close of ver. 2. But the conclusion of the chapter shows, that the captivity is not simply to end, but that its termination involves a positively new and higher order of things. **Judah and Jerusalem**, *i. e.*, Judah generally, Jerusalem specially.

Ver. 2. **All nations**. In the first instance, of course, all those that have offended against Israel; yet these are representatives of the heathen world in general, whose position towards God's people is essentially the same. **The valley of Jehoshaphat**. According to 2 Chron. xx., Jehoshaphat by the miraculous help of the Lord gained a great victory over a Gentile army, in a valley, which subsequently for this reason took the name of that king. Does the prophet here mean that valley? Keil and many others say, no. They insist that the valley of the prophet is an imaginary one, in or near Jerusalem, and is called the valley of Jehoshaphat = "Jehovah judges," because of its being the place of judgment. The valley certainly stands in close relation to Jerusalem, for in ver. 16 it is said that Jehovah, who there judges, shall utter his voice from Zion and Jerusalem. But in this case there is no need of applying a merely geographical measure. Jehovah may judge in a valley far distant from Jerusalem, and yet have his dwelling in Israel, in Zion, and Jerusalem. (See 2 Chron. xx. 15–17, where the Lord, while contending for Israel is, at the same time, regarded as being in his sanctuary in Jerusalem.) If the phrase is to be taken in a symbolic sense, it might be asked, why Joel should have fixed upon a "valley" as the place of judgment, and should have given it the name of a well-known king? He was undoubtedly thinking of the great event under Jehoshaphat. The name of this monarch was significant, and he calls the place "valley of Jehoshaphat," because he was reminded of that fortunate king who was victorious over Israel's enemies, and because of the peculiar significance of the name Jehoshaphat = Jehovah judges. By way of anticipation he tells what they have to expect, who are gathered there. To the question, does he mean that well-known valley then, we answer, yes, and no. Yes, because he evidently had in view the spot on which Jeshoshaphat won his victory. No, because he as evidently goes on to describe a more than common battle fought on a spot which could be identified on no map. The multitudes gathered there are too vast to be assembled in any ordinary valley. In painting this prophetic vision there can be no doubt that Joel had in his mind the historical narrative in 2 Chron. xx. **Deal with**. E. V. Plead with, *i. e.* to charge with crime, with the design of punishing it. Taking the word in its full sense of arguing a cause, it implies that the nations argue their own cause, and attempt to vindicate themselves, though, of course they could have no ground to stand upon, since Jehovah is alone and always in the right. **My people, my heritage**. Therefore what the nations did to Israel must be criminal. **They have scattered**. The prophet here has in mind what he afterwards more fully describes.

Ver. 3. They not only scattered God's people, but treated them with the greatest contempt. This, however, is only mentioned as *pars pro toto*. At least in ver. 19 the prophet looks beyond what was immediately before him, and names oppressions which Israel had long before experienced, so that it is evident that he is thinking of the heathen world in general, and of its hostility to God's people. A special reference to the future Exile is not to be assumed, as this does not yet come into the prophet's horizon.

[Pusey: ver. 1. *For, behold*. The prophet by the *for* shows that he is about to explain in detail, what he had before spoken of in sum. By the word *behold*, he stirs up our minds for something great, which he is to set before our eyes, and which we should not be prepared to expect or believe.— Ver. 2. *Valley of Jehoshaphat*. It may be that the imagery is furnished by that great deliverance which God gave to Jehoshaphat when *Ammon, and Moab, and Edom came against him*, and Jehoshaphat appealed to God, and God turned their swords every one against the other. *And they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah* (blessing); *for there they blessed the Lord*. 2 Chron. xx. 21. That valley, however, is nowhere called the *valley* of *Jehoshaphat*. It continued, says the sacred writer, to be called *the valley of Berachah unto this day*. And it is so called still. Southwest of Bethlehem and east of Tekoa are still three or four acres of ruin (Robinson, *Pal.*, iii. 275), bearing the name of Boreikut (Seetzen's *Map*; Ritter, *Erdk.*, xv. 635; Wolcott, *Excurs. to Hebron*, p. 43). The only valley called the valley of Jehoshaphat is the valley of Kedron, encircling Jerusalem on the east. The valley was the common burial-place for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (Williams, *H. C.*, ii. 523; Thomson, *Land and Book*, ii. 481.— Ver. 3. *Cast lots*. They treated God's people as of no account, and delighted in showing their contempt towards them. They chose no one above another as though all alike were worthless. A *girl* they sold for an evening's revelry, and a *boy* they exchanged for a night's debauch.

Wünsche: ver. 3. According to the then prevalent custom, the prisoners of war were sold as slaves. *My people*. We are to understand by this, not the people as a whole, but only the portion taken captive. But the mistreatment of this part of the covenant people, in the view of the O. T. prophets, was a mistreatment of the whole body. —F.]

Vers. 4–8. **And also what have ye**, etc. After speaking of the crimes of the heathen in general, against Israel, the prophet turns to the neighboring nations, Tyre, Sidon, and the borders of Philistia, *i. e.*, the five small Philistine principalities. He, suddenly, as it were, remembers those who had committed such crimes against Israel as those

already mentioned. The question, in fact, especially concerns them. With the genus comes the species which is included in it. In a lively description, we find ourselves in the midst of the nations (comp. ver. 11) with whom the process of pleading by Jehovah is carried on. For afterwards there is no more pleading, but a decision. They are represented as claiming to be right; but any presumptive claim of theirs to do what they had done is denied, in the first instance, by the general question, "what have ye to do with me?" a question more fully answered afterwards. Their right to inflict injury upon Israel, or to retaliate for injuries inflicted upon themselves, is denied. They are the persons on whom the retaliation shall come, and that swiftly. Vers. 5, 6 prove the righteousness of the retribution, by a reference to the crimes committed, while vers. 7, 8 declare the certainty of it. Ver. 5 alludes, without doubt, to the pillaging of Judah and Jerusalem by the Philistines and Arabians under Joram. 2 Chron. xxi. 17. They then carried off the treasures of the temple and the palaces of the city, the latter being designated as "Mine," because they belonged to those who were among God's people. The Philistines were the immediate perpetrators of the robbery, but the Phœnicians, the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, were also involved in the guilt of it, for they bought the captives and sold them to the sons of Javan, or the Greeks of Asia Minor. In vers. 7, 8, there is a promise that these enslaved captives shall be brought home again, and that, in retaliation, the same thing shall be done to these enemies of Israel, which they have done to Israel. Jehovah will sell them into the hands of the children of Judah, who will again sell them to the Sabæans in Arabia Felix. This prophecy was fulfilled by Alexander the Great and his successors, under whom many Jewish captives were liberated and restored to their own land, while various parts of Philistia and Phœnicia were brought under Jewish rule.

[Pusey: ver. 4. *What have ye to do with me.* These words declare that those nations had no part in God. He accounts them as aliens. But the words convey besides, that they would, unprovoked, have to do with God, harassing his people without cause. — Ver. 5. *My silver.* Not the silver and gold of the temple, as some have thought. At least, up to the Prophet's time they had not done this. God calls the silver and the gold, which He through his providence had bestowed on Judah, *my silver and my gold.* — Ver. 6. *And ye have sold,* etc. This sin of the Tyrians was probably old and inveterate. As they were the great carriers of the world's traffic, so they were slave-dealers, and in the earliest times, men-stealers. The Greek antehistoric tradition exhibits them as trading and selling women from both Greece and Egypt. As their trade became more fixed, they themselves stole no more, but like Christian nations, sold those whom others stole or made captive. Even from the times of the Judges, Israel was exposed in part to the violence and fraud of Tyre and Sidon. Sisera's army came from their territory, and Deborah speaks of "a damsel or two" as the expected prey of each man in his host. In Joel, the Philistines and Tyrians appear as combined in the traffic. In Amos, the Philistines are the robbers of men, the Phœnicians are the receivers and the sellers. Probably such acts were expressly prohibited by the "brotherly covenant," or treaty between Solomon and Hiram, king of Tyre. For Amos says that Tyre forgot that treaty, when she sold wholesale the captive Israelites whom the Philistines had carried off. The temptation to Tyrian covetousness was aggravated by the ease with which they could possess themselves of the Jews, the facility of transport, and, as it seems, their value. The wholesale price at which Nicanor set the Jews his expected prisoners, and at which he hoped to sell 180,000, shows the extent of the traffic; and their relative value, £2 14*s*. 9*d*., as the average price of each of ninety slaves in Judæa, implies a retail price at the place of sale above the then ordinary price of man. — Ver. 8. *I will sell your sons — the Sabæans.* Tyre was taken by Alexander, who sold 13,000 of the inhabitants into slavery. Sidon was taken by Artaxerxes Ochus, and it is said above 40,000 perished. The Sabæans are probably mentioned as being the remotest nation in the opposite direction, a nation, probably, the partner of Tyre's traffic in men as well as in their other merchandise, and who would as soon trade *in* Tyrians, as *with* Tyrians. They were, like the Phœnicians, a wealthy merchant people, and, of old, united with them in the trade of the world, the Sabæans sending forth their fleets across the Indian Ocean, as the Tyrians along the Mediterranean Sea. Three fathers of distinct races bore the name of Sheba, one a descendant of Ham, the other two descended from Shem. The Shemite Sabæans were, some descendants from Sheba the tenth son of Joktan; the others from Sheba, son of Abraham and Keturah. The Sheba of the prophet appears to have been the wealthy Sheba (descended from Joktan) near the Red Sea. They too had distant colonies whither the Tyrians could be transported, as far from Phœnicia as the shores of the Ægean are from Palestine..

Wünsche: *Tyre*, lit., *Rock*. Though Tyre was historically a younger city than Sidon, from its rapid growth and great importance as a commercial centre, it is usually mentioned first when the two cities are named together. There were two Tyres, namely, the Old, built on the main land, and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar after a siege of thirteen years, and the New, built on a rocky island about a mile from the shore. *Sidon* comes from צוּד, to fish. Its founders were probably fishermen. — *Desirable things — Your temples.* If by the first phrase the prophet means the rich adornments of God's temple, and by the latter the heathen temples, the crime here charged is the double one of spoliation and profanation. — *Javan.* Credner regards this as the name of a city in Arabia Felix. Hitzig places it in Jemen, and thinks it to be the same as the one mentioned Ezek. xxvii. 19. Schröder takes the word in the sense of distant, unknown nations. But it is undoubtedly the name of the Greeks of Asia Minor. — F.]

Vers. 9, 10. **Proclaim this.** The prophet has already spoken of the gathering of the nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat, where Jehovah will plead with them. We have heard the accusation and the sentence; and now comes the swift execution of it. Proclaim *this.* What? If it be **Prepare** (sanctify) **war**, and this is to be proclaimed to the heathen, those charged to bear the message should be the heralds of the heathen. But the contents of the message show that it is directed not to the heathen but to Israel. No one shall remain behind, nor feel himself weak, nor withdraw from the holy contest, which is to bring "decision." It must be considered, then, as a summons to Israel. The battle described is no common one. It is a battle, in which Jehovah Himself shall be present as a judge deciding the fate of the heathen, and help-

ing Israel to win a glorious victory over them. The summoner is Jehovah Himself, or the prophet speaking in his name, who, in his vivid description of the contest, feels himself to be present at it. *Proclaim this* must, then refer to what was said before, namely: that Jehovah will recompense the heathen for their crimes against Israel, and that Israel shall be fully avenged. For the counterpart of the proposed change of the implements of peace into the instruments of war, see Is. ii. 4; Mic. iv. 3.

[Wünsche: *Proclaim*, lit., sanctify. The use of this word shows that this great and decisive war is a holy and a righteous one. Credner, Hitzig, Keil, and others regard this as addressed not to the Jews, but to the heathen nations, *i. e.*, to their heralds who are, at the bidding of Jehovah, to summon these nations to a war against Israel. But on this supposition the use of the word "sanctify" is inexplicable. — F.]

Vers. 11-16. **Hasten and come.** Now the nations are summoned to collect speedily, as if they were about to accomplish something against Israel, while really they are rushing to their own destruction. **Round about.** The reference is not to the immediate neighbors of Israel, but the expression is used because God's people is regarded as holding a central position among the nations. The prophet, however, cannot think of the assemblage of the nations without offering a prayer to Jehovah that He would cause his mighty ones to come down, where the gathering occurs, in the valley of Jehoshaphat. **Thy mighty ones.** According to Keil they are the angels as heavenly hosts. But if in ver. 9 they are men (Keil refers that version to the heathen), they must also be men here. The idea of the angels coming from heaven to help is not Joel's. It is Israel who fights, under the command of Jehovah (comp. Judges v. 13). *Thy* affords no proof against this exposition, since Israel is God's people, and Israel's mighty ones are God's.

Ver. 12. Here Jehovah himself speaks, and the whole verses may, therefore, be regarded as a kind of answer to the prophet's prayer. Jehovah summons the nations to awake and to come up (עָלָה here means to ascend) to the valley of Jehoshaphat. For though the gathering place is a valley, and Israel's mighty ones go down into it from Zion, yet the heathen come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, because, being near to Jerusalem, it is on a higher elevation than the territories (*e. g.*, Philistia) of the neighboring nations. The reason why they are to come up to this valley is found in the meaning of the name Jehoshaphat = "Jehovah sits there to judge." He does not engage directly in the contest; He does not lead the army, but He sits on a throne to judge, — to pronounce the sentence, and to execute it by means of his mighty ones. At the same time he renders essential aid by those terrible phenomena of nature spoken of (vers. 15, 16), which mark the contest as "the day of the Lord," the result of which is the utter destruction of these enemies. How Jehovah will execute the sentence pronounced by Him as Judge, is explained in ver. 13, for the exhortation here addressed to the "mighty ones," while the two armies front each other in battle array, is given by Jehovah. This is evident from the fact that the battle is to be the execution of a deserved sentence. Hence the attack and the fight are no more spoken of, but the result simply, represented by the figure of cutting down ripe corn. Of a threshing and winnowing of the corn thus cut down, as Keil suggests, there is no hint; for with these enemies of Jehovah there could be no separating the wheat and the chaff. The only point in the figure on which attention is fixed, is the "cutting down" what had been before standing. Then comes a new and stronger simile to represent the destruction of these enemies. They shall not only be "cut off," but "crushed," or trodden like grapes in the wine-press. The overflowing "fullness of the vats" is significant (Keil denies it). It represents the general blood-shedding which shall be proportioned to the "greatness of their wickedness." The execution itself is not formally described, but it is plainly enough indicated in ver. 14. **Multitudes**, or as some render it "tumult." The "mighty ones" are now to engage in their bloody work, amid the uproar of battle. The noise expressed or implied is not, as Keil supposes, that of nations rushing together, for they are already assembled, and now, the moment is one of judgment, or "decision." The valley is the valley of Jehoshaphat, the "valley of decision," the phrase being immediately followed by the words "for the day of the Lord is come." This shows that what had been commanded (ver. 13) is now being accomplished, and that the contest involves the judgment and destruction of these enemies. This catastrophe is the "day of the Lord," which is attended by those awful phenomena described (vers. 15, 16), by which Jehovah displays his omnipotence, and really determines the issue of the battle. The "darkness," before noticed as a presage of "the day," now introduces it. "Thunder" = an immediate display of God's power. "Giving forth his voice," lit., "roaring," *i. e.*, of the lion in pursuit of prey, denotes God's design to punish and destroy. Of course Joel has in his mind not an ordinary thunder-storm, but a far more terrible one. Israel had been previously threatened with a day of punishment marked by similar presages, in connection with the visitation of locusts, but it had passed away. Now, however, the storm overtakes and destroys the heathen, while Israel is not only protected by Jehovah from the judgments that overwhelm the enemies of God, but is introduced into new and far higher privileges than ever before were possessed.

[Wünsche: Ver. 12. *Sit to judge.* This posture of the judge was common to the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. In Latin, *sedere* is often used in the sense of *judicare* (Liv. iii. 46); so in Greek *καθίζειν*. The decision of a judge made by him standing, was generally deemed to have no legal force. *All nations.* The "all" is limited by "round about." Hengstenberg, Keil, and others understand by it all the nations who have become in any way related to the kingdom of God, *i. e.*, all the nations of the earth, as before the final judgment, the Gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world. Credner supposes that the meaning of the double image used in ver. 13 is, that as songs of gladness, dancing, and other signs of joy mark the harvest and vintage, so the Jews will find the highest enjoyment in the day of judgment of their enemies. But there is no ground for supposing that the covenant people will have any such feelings.

Pusey: Ver. 13. In itself, the harvest as well as the vintage, might describe the end of this world as to both the good and the bad, in that the wheat is severed from the chaff and the tares, and the treading of the wine-press separates the wine which is stored up from the husks which are cast

away. Yet nothing is said here of storing up aught, either the wheat or the wine, but only of the ripeness of the harvest, and that the *vats overflow because their wickedness is great.* The harvest is sometimes, though more rarely, used for destruction; the treading of the wine-press is always used as an image of God's anger; the vintage, of destruction. It seems probable then, that the ripeness of the harvest and the fullness of the vats are alike used of the ripeness for destruction. — Ver. 14. The prophet continues, as in amazement at the great throng assembling upon one another, *multitudes, multitudes,* as though, whichever way he looked, there were yet more of these tumultuous masses. It was one living, surging, boiling sea; throngs upon throngs, mere throngs. The word rendered *multitudes* suggests, besides, the thought of the hum and din of these masses, thronging, onward blindly, to their own destruction. — F.]

Vers. 17–21. **And ye shall know.** Jehovah, by his judgment of Israel's enemies, proves Himself to be Israel's God; and from Zion, his dwelling place, all strangers and unclean ones are banished. This is the immediate gain to Israel, but other benefits are consequent upon it (comp. Rev. xxi. 27). A time of extraordinary prosperity follows.

Ver. 18. Wine and milk flow in richest abundance. The mountains and the hills, *i. e.*, the naturally sterile districts, become very fruitful, and as this result depends on the supply of water, the brooks shall not become dry. **Vale of Shittim,** or Valley of Acacias, now quite dry, — for in such a soil the acacia grows, — shall be watered by a fountain flowing from the house of the Lord, and shall become fruitful. This description, of course, is not to be taken in its merely literal sense. As the blessedness originates with Jehovah, the fertilizing stream is represented as coming from the Temple, the dwelling-place of God. What a contrast between the state of things here depicted, and the condition of the land after its devastation by the locusts!

Ver. 19. To render Israel's blessed condition the more conspicuous, the picture of the desolated heathendom is placed beside it. Egypt and Edom are specially mentioned on account of their **violence against Judah's sons,** namely, shedding their blood. It is uncertain, what precise instances of this are referred to. Egypt's sins were probably those of the olden time (Ex. l. 16). For that of Edom, see Amos i. 11; Ob. 10. They, however, like the Phœnicians and Philistines in another place, are here taken as representatives of the enemies of Israel. (Comp. in ref. to Edom Is. xxxiv. 63; Jer. xlix. 7; Ezek. iii. 5.)

Ver. 20. Wholly different shall be the condition of Israel. Judah and Jerusalem shall dwell forever, *i. e.*, they shall be inhabited.

Ver. 21. While Israel is thus blessed, it will be proved that the wrong committed against him has been fully avenged, or as some take the word, annulled, *i. e.*, by having been punished; and the all-embracing assurance is repeated, *Jehovah shall dwell in Zion.*

[Pusey: Ver. 18. *A fountain shall come forth out of the house of the Lord.* The existence of a large supply of water under the Temple is beyond all question. While the Temple was still standing, mention is made of an ever-flowing fountain under it, as well as pools and cisterns for preserving rain-water. One well acquainted with the localities says, "The pavements had slopes for the sake of a flush of water in order to cleanse away the blood from the victims. For on festival occasions many thousands of animals were slain. But of water there was an unfailing supply, a copious and natural fountain within gushing over; and there being moreover wonderful underground receptacles, in the substructure of the temple, and each of these having numerous pipes, the several streams inter-communicating." The same writer relates that, more than half a mile from the city, he was told to stoop down, and heard the sound of gushing waters underground. The natural fountain, then, beneath the Temple, was doubtless augmented by waters brought from a distance, as required by the "diverse washings" of the priests, and to carry off the blood of the victims. Whencesoever this water was supplied, it furnished Jerusalem with an abundant supply of water. The superfluous water was carried off underground to what is now "the fountain of the Virgin," and thence again to the "pool of Siloam." Thence it carried fertility to the gardens of Siloam. The blood of the victims flowed into the same brook, Kedron, and was a known source of fertility. That little oasis of verdure was a fit emblem of the Jewish people, itself bedewed by the stream which issued from the temple of God. But it made no sensible impression out of or beyond itself. Hereafter the stream, whose streamlets "made glad the city of God," should make the wildest, driest spots of our humanity "like the garden of the Lord." *Valley of Shittim,* or acacia-trees, is a dry valley, for in such the eastern acacia or sandal-wood grows. This wood is very strong and of incredible lightness and beauty. Of it the ark of God was made. —Ver. 19. *Egypt a desolation.* Brief as Joel's words are, they express an abiding condition of Egypt. They are expanded by Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah. But the three words of Joel are more comprehensive than any prophecy, except those of Ezekiel. They foretell that abiding condition, not only by the force of the words, but by the contrast with an abiding condition of bliss. The words say, not only that it shall "be desolated" as by a passing scourge, but it "shall pass over into that state;" it shall become what it had not been, and this, in contrast with the abiding condition of God's people. Yet when Joel threatened Egypt, there were no human symptoms of decay; the instruments of its successive overthrows were as yet wild hordes, or had not the beginnings of being. Egypt would not become barren except by miracle. Even now it recovers whenever water is applied. Nothing could desolate Egypt except man's abiding negligence or oppression. No passing storm could annihilate a fertility which poured in upon it in ever-renewing richness. Egypt is alike prolific in its people, and in the productions of the earth. Yet with these powers implanted in nature unimpaired, the population is diminished, the land half desert. Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Greeks, Arabs, and Turks, have tried their hands on Egypt. Strange that selfishness or powerlessness for good should have rested upon all; strange that no one should have developed its inherent powers. One long prosperity, and one long adversity. One scarcely broken day, and one troubled night. And that doom foretold in the mid-day of its prosperity by these three words, *Egypt shall be a desolation — Edom a desolate wilderness.* Its ancient capital, and its rock-dwellings long unknown, have been within the last forty years, again revealed to us. The land is almost the more hopelessly desolate, because it was once artificially cultivated. Edom

was the centre of the intercourse of nations. The hill-sides, and mountains, once covered with earth and clothed with vineyards, are now bare rocks. Yet the traces of former fertility are innumerable: every spot capable of sustaining vegetable life was carefully watered and cultivated. The ancient inhabitants seem to have left no accessible place untouched. They have exhibited equal art and industry in eliciting from the grand walls of their marvelous capital, whatever the combination of climate, irrigation, and botanical skill could foster in the scanty soil afforded them. The desolation began soon after the captivity of Judah, and Edom's malicious joy in it. In Joel's time, not the slightest shadow was cast on her future. No human eye could tell that she would be finally desolate. But God said by Joel, "Edom shall be a desolate wilderness," and so it is! — Ver. 21. *I will cleanse her blood.* The word rendered *cleansed,* is not used for natural cleansing, nor is the image taken from the cleansing of the body. The word signifies only to pronounce innocent, or to free from guilt. Nor is *blood* used of sinfulness generally, but only of the actual guilt of shedding blood. The whole then cannot be an image taken from the cleansing of physical defilement, like the words of Ezek. xvi. 9, "then washed I thee with water," etc. Nor, again, can it mean the forgiveness of sins generally, but only the pronouncing innocent the blood which had been shed. This the only meaning of the words, falls in with the mention of innocent blood, for shedding which, Egypt and Edom had been condemned. In punishing the shedding of it, God declared the blood innocent, whose shedding He punished. — F.]

THEOLOGICAL.

1. Three topics are discussed in this chapter: the enmity of the "nations" against Israel; the punishment of the nations; and the new happiness of Israel.

(1.) The enmity of the nations against Israel. How does the prophet regard this? Is the hostility only accidental, exhibiting itself simply in some particular acts? Or has it a deeper ground, namely, in the antagonism of the nations as heathen against Israel as God's people, or the antagonism between idolatry and the worship of the true God? The mere words of the prophet would not lead us to suppose that he regarded it in the latter light. He speaks only of acts of pillage, carrying away captives, shedding of blood. Nor must we interpret ver. 5 as if the acts described were directed against the Temple as such; nor are they the necessary and exclusive offspring of heathenism But we may and must say that these acts of injury appeared to be the outgrowth of the religious antagonism between the Gentiles and Israel. The people of Israel were God's people, and enmity against the former was in fact enmity against God's people, and God himself. That the prophet so regards it, vers. 4; 5 plainly show. This hostility of the Gentiles or nations, though in one sense accidental, really reflects an inward and profound hatred. Hence the general expression, "all ye heathen, or Gentile," although, in point of fact, Israel had been injured only by some of them. Thus Israel stands on one side, and all the heathen or Gentiles on the other, in the attitude of antagonists. What one of the latter does, they may be all expected to do, and so may be held responsible for it, inasmuch as they constitute one whole. Therefore, if Israel is to be helped, the judgment must fall on the whole heathen world. Finally, the prophet nowhere intimates that the Gentiles should be employed as God's instruments in punishing Israel for his guilt The Gentiles alone appear as the guilty ones.

(2.) The punishment of the nations was a certain and necessary result of Israel's position as God's people. They had scattered them; they had parted their land; they had taken their silver and gold; in a word, they had thus taken God's property, and He could not allow this to go unpunished. He must stand up for his people and destroy their enemies. Though Israel is the agent in inflicting, yet the punishment comes really from the divine hand. Jehovah assembles the nations, and, in the contest between them and his people, gives, by his immediate help, the victory to the latter. This punishment involves the destruction of these enemies. The menaces relating to this point may seem unduly severe; but it is to be observed that the guilt of these nations is very aggravated, going far beyond the ordinary measure of enmity and crime, and therefore, according to the *jus talionis,* the retribution should be proportionate. Credner's idea that Joel here abandons himself to the feelings of unbridled revenge, is wholly groundless. Meier justly remarks against this notion, that no prophet ever describes these bloody conflicts as simply growing out of human revenge; they ever regard them as signs of that Higher Power which strikes with destruction everything ungodly. And while the later prophets do not speak of bloody phenomena such as are here described, they yet plainly intimate, that before the consummation of the Messianic age, a catastrophe involving such scenes must come, as a transition epoch, in which everything unholy, as well in Israel as in the heathen world, will be destroyed. The grand object on which all depends, and which faith accepts as certain, is the complete subjugation of God's enemies, and the complete triumph of his people. The pencil that paints this picture is, indeed, dipped in strong colors, corresponding to the energy of the divine powers which shall realize it. The idea set forth is the essential thing; the expression of it is, of course, modified by the prophet's historical relations, and the character of the times in which he lived.

(3.) Israel's new felicity. Amid the extraordinary manifestations of divine wrath connected with the destruction of the wicked, Israel is protected and realizes anew that Jehovah is his God. His land shall no more be seized by a stranger, and its remarkable fertility will be a proof that Jehovah is dwelling in the midst of it. The latter is the main thing in the promise, the productiveness of the land being simply an evidence of it. Of this the fountain issuing forth from the house of the Lord is a symbol and a pledge. Here the promise goes beyond what is merely physically possible, as do also some features of the judgment of the heathen; from which it is plain that the prophet's mind was fixed, not so much on the literal fulfillment of the prediction, as upon the general truth, that Jehovah will, in a manner eminent and unequivocal, own Israel as his people, by bestowing on him the richest blessings.

2. If now we inquire into the fulfillment of this prophecy, objectively considered, we shall quickly discover, that things took at first quite a different shape from that which Joel seems to have supposed they would. He sees in the heathen only the enemies of God's people who are to be pun-

ished, and he announces their certain punishment on account of their many acts of violence against Israel. The later prophets, on the other hand, charge God's own people with their sins, and predict judgments, which God will employ the heathen as his instruments to inflict, and which, we know, in later times they did. But there is no evidence, *i. e.*, from his prophecy, that Joel was acquainted with this fact of the future. It is wholly unwarrantable to interpret his words (ver. 1), as if he had foreseen and foretold what later prophets announced, namely, the Exile, and the dispersion by the Romans, without giving the reason for either of these events. He does not think it possible — so far as his prophecy shows — that a divine judgment should be inflicted upon Israel. Both the internal (*i. e.*, the guiltiness of Israel and Judah) and the external antecedent conditions of such a judgment are wanting. He knows nothing of those secular powers which brought on the exile, or at least, he does not know them as powers with whom Israel is to come into conflict. It is a false view of the nature of prophecy to suppose that events of the most distant future were revealed with equal clearness to the prophets whose experience, in a sort of intermediate way, corresponded with, or contradicted that future. According to the later prophets the glorious state of Israel is reached, after his having passed through an intermediate condition of humiliation. Joel knows nothing of such an intermediate condition. He represents the felicity of Israel as resulting not simply from the truthfulness of God, who will not utterly abandon even his unfaithful people, while He punishes them, but as a thing which they might at any time secure by penitential confession of sins, and calling upon the Lord. But there is an essential harmony between Joel and the later prophets. How then were their predictions fulfilled? The menaces against the heathen nations mentioned have been remarkably accomplished by actual historical events, particularly by Alexander the Great and his successors. But we must look for a larger and fuller accomplishment of the prophecies of Joel. It is evident that he had in his mind a grand consummation, since he connects it with the general outpouring of the Spirit and the announcement of the day of the Lord. He sees the heathen world utterly overwhelmed, while Israel enters into and holds the position of God's people. The period of conflict is passed, and that of victory and peace has come.

Now as regards the fulfillment of these prophecies, we might repeat the remarks already made respecting the later ones of Hosea. For Israel as a nation that glorious time had not yet come; nor was there any ground for the immediate expectation of it. The tenor of the prophecy would seem to indicate that it applied exclusively to Israel, because in Joel's time, Israel alone was God's people. But this view, which makes God's people and Israel as a nation identical, though sanctioned in a certain sense by the Old Covenant, has been clearly set aside by the New Covenant. While then the Jewish nation, as such, has no ground for expecting, as the Chiliasts maintain, this promised felicity, it is nevertheless certain that the promise is valid for the people of God as typified by Israel. Its fulfillment is to be looked for in a far different and more glorious way than the prophet, from his stand-point, anticipated. [Whether the so-called Chiliastic theory of the future of the Jews be true or not, there is no necessary antagonism between it and the admission, under the New Covenant, of the Gentiles to the spiritual privileges of God's people. The Jews still exist as a distinct people. And Paul certainly seems to intimate (Rom. xi. 25) that there is yet a glorious future for Israel, which shall be realized when "the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." — F.] The new Israel lives in the hope of a general outpouring of the Spirit, which was begun at Pentecost, and has been continued ever since, — of a final, complete deliverance, and a glorious victory over all its enemies; in a word, of a felicity and salvation which shall be a proof of God's immediate presence in the midst of it. Whether Joel foresaw all this, *i. e.*, understood the full meaning of his own prediction, may be doubted; but, in the sense already explained, we can appropriate it to ourselves, as Keil remarks: "The people and heritage of the Lord is not only the Old Testament Israel as such, but the Church of God, embracing those who lived under the New as well as the Old Covenant. On it his Spirit is poured out. Jehovah's judgment of the nations for injuries done to his people is not simply the judgment of such of them, *e. g.*, the Romans and others, that have maltreated the Jews, but the final, general judgment of all nations, of all the enemies of the Church of God. It is this fundamental truth, this glorious hope made sure by almost the oldest of the prophets, which the people of God, from the beginning, have lifted up as a standard. And hence we see in all the victories which God has granted to his people, and in all the judgments inflicted upon the heathen neighbors and enemies of Israel, a fulfillment of this promise, which again finds, as by a thousandfold refraction, a still more particular fulfillment in all the special deliverances of his children, and in all their experiences of his protection. So Luther is not wrong in regarding the rich blessings promised to Judah as identical with those revealed in the Gospel, and through it bestowed upon the Christian Church. As God's heritage, Zion experienced from the first, and continues to experience, the blessed presence and the grace of God. Still, the final, and complete fulfillment will only come with the consummation of the kingdom of the Parousia, or Second Advent of the Lord.

HOMILETICAL.

Ver. 1. *When I shall bring again.* God hath set bounds to everything, especially to the sufferings of his people. He determines their beginning, and how long they shall endure. Rejoice, ye faithful, the Lord shall bring again your captivity. He will deliver you from all evil, and help you to reach his heavenly kingdom.

[Henry: Though the bondage of God's people may be grievous and very long, yet it shall not be everlasting. There is a *day*, there is a *time*, fixed for the *bringing again of the captivity* of God's children, for the redeeming them from *the power of the grave*. — F.]

Ver. 2. *I will gather all nations.* Though wicked men say that the Lord does not see them, they shall learn by experience that He does, in the time when He shall judge them. Ye proud Gentiles, who cease not to afflict the little flock of the faithful, know that a day of judgment is coming, when the Lord will avenge the blood of his servants. — *Whom they have scattered.* Those who are unjustly exiled should leave vengeance in the hands of God the righteous judge. Mark that all divine punishment, and even the final judgment of the wicked is for

the sake of the godly. Behold how God takes care of his people! Therefore, be of good courage! Dost thou belong to God's people? Then He will take care of thee, though He may seem to delay doing so. God's honor will not permit his people to perish, and their enemies to triumph, for their enemies are his enemies.

[Pusey: *Will plead with them.* God maketh Himself in such wise a party, as not to condemn those unconvicted, yet the pleading has a separate awfulness of its own. God impleads, so as to allow Himself to be impleaded and answered; but there is no answer. He will set forth what He had done, and how we have requited Him. And we are without excuse. Our memories witness against us; our knowledge acknowledges his justice; our conscience convicts us; all unite in pronouncing ourselves ungrateful, and God holy and just. For a sinner to see himself is to condemn himself, and in the day of judgment God will bring before each sinner his whole self. — F.]

Vers. 3–5. *They have cast lots.* In a time of war terrible crimes are very common, but in due season God will punish them. — *What have ye to do with me.* The true Church is the heavenly Father's daughter, and Christ's beloved spouse. Therefore he who persecutes it, is persecuting God and Christ. How great the foolishness of sinners who want to plead with and defy God! O, how certainly will their defiance of Him be visited on their own head. Therefore be humble, and confess thy misdeeds, if thou wouldst escape divine punishment.

[Pusey: *Will ye render me a recompense.* Men never want pleas for themselves. Men forget their own wrong-doings, and remember their sufferings. Men, when they submit not to God chastening them, hate Him.

Henry: *My silver.* Those who take away the estates of good men for well-doing, will be found guilty of sacrilege; they take God's silver and gold. It is no new thing for those who have been very civil to their neighbors, to find them very unkind and unneighborly, and for those who do no injuries to suffer many. — F.]

Vers. 1–7. The raging of the nations and their rulers is an indication of that fleshly mind which is always opposed to the kingdom of God. So long as the hope of that kingdom was confined to Israel, the hatred of the heathen was spent on Israel. When that kingdom was taken from Israel, and given to the "little flock," which "brought forth the fruit of it," that hatred was simply transferred. The world ever has sought and still seeks to divide the heritage of the Lord, and to bring to shame those who trust in his word of promise. But when God regathers his scattered people Israel, and reestablishes down-trodden Jerusalem, He will also deliver the rest of his elect, and fully recompense them for the sufferings which the world has inflicted on them.

Ver. 9. *Prepare war.* Peace must end when we are called on to combat the enemies of God. Then, all must take up arms. "I came not to send peace, but a sword." Through conflict to victory! through war to peace!

Ver. 10. [Pusey: *Ploughshares into swords.* Peace within with God flows forth in peace with man. Where there is not rest in God, all is unrest. And so, all which was needful for life, the means of subsistence, care of health, were to be forgotten for war. — F.]

Vers. 11, 12. *Hasten and come.* Behold how the Lord holds the godless persecutors of his Church in derision! Let them do what they like, his vengeance shall finally overtake them. If God be for us, who can be against us? The Lord sits as ruler, and is ever judging nations and individuals. No one can escape his judgment. He may long seem to be silent, but ever and anon He comes forth with his judgments now, the harbingers of the final and decisive one.

[Henry: *Thy mighty ones.* When God's cause is to be pleaded, either by the law or by the sword, He has those ready who will plead it effectually; witnesses ready to appear for Him in the court of judgment, soldiers ready to appear for Him in the field of battle. — F.]

Ver. 13. *For their wickedness is great.* When the measure of men's sins is full, then execution comes. The judgments of God are then no longer delayed.

Vers. 14–16. *The day of the Lord is near.* Tremble ye godless, for the day is near when the Lord will judge you! Behold, the lion is already roaring out of Zion announcing your punishment. Should not that voice, which shall one day be heard by the whole earth, arouse you to repentance? To the wicked, God is a roaring lion, but to the godly a strong fortress.

As God always cared for and defended his peculiar people against the rage of their enemies, so Christ now protects his peculiar people, Christians, against the violence of their foes. He may allow them, for a time, to be persecuted, to try and perfect their faith by "manifold temptations," but, in the end, He will destroy their enemies. Examples of this have occurred in past ages; but a greater ruin awaits them. When the great and terrible day of the Lord comes, He will gather all his enemies into the valley of Jehoshaphat; He will bring them before his tribunal, and plead with them for his heritage and people, and will return upon their own heads all the evils they have inflicted upon the true Christendom.

[Henry: *The Lord shall roar.* The judgment of the great day shall make the ears of those to tingle who continue the implacable enemies of God. As blessings out of Zion are the sweetest blessings, and enough to make heaven and earth *sing*, so terrors out of Zion are the sorest terrors, and enough to make heaven and earth shake. — The saints are the Israel of God; now in the great day (1) Their longings shall be satisfied. *The Lord will be the Hope of his people.* As He always was the Founder and Foundation of their hopes, so He will then be the Crown of their hopes. They shall arrive at the desired *haven;* shall put to shore after a stormy voyage; they shall go to be forever at home with God. (2) Their happiness shall be confirmed. God will be in that day *the Strength of the children of Israel,* enabling them to welcome that day, and to bear up under the weight of its glories and joys. — F.]

Ver. 17. *Ye shall know.* So long as believers are here below, sighing under the burden of sin, and not seeing the means of deliverance, they are apt to think that God has abandoned them.

[Henry: The knowledge which true believers have of God is (1) An *appropriating* knowledge; they know that He is the Lord *their God,* yet not theirs only, but theirs in common with the whole Church. (2) An *experimental* knowledge. They shall find Him their Hope and Strength, in the worst of times. Those know best the goodness of God, who have *tasted* and *seen* it.

Pusey: God Himself joins on his own words to those of the prophet. *Ye shall know* by experience, by sight, face to face, what ye now believe,

that I am the Lord your God. *Your God*, your own, as much as if possessed by none besides, filling all with gladness, yet fully possessed by each. —F.]

Ver. 18. *In that day*. Glorious are the promises to the Church of the New Covenant, but they will be completely fulfilled only in a blessed eternity. In this world God feeds us, comforts us with his Word and sacraments, consoles us with manifold blessings in Christ, but in the future world, this grace will be far more superabundant. — By the *mountains* are meant the kingdoms of this world, which shall flow with the wine and milk of Christian doctrine, by which a rich measure of spiritual gifts shall be imparted to men. For the Gospel is very finely compared to wine as well as milk; to wine, since it is administered to the adult to gladden his heart, and confirm his faith, hope, and love; to milk, as it is also administered to children in Christ, who, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word. As wine comforts and strengthens man's heart, so the Word of God preserves and increases faith, and imparts consolation under sufferings. The law does the opposite, holy and just though it be. It accuses them, and threatens death; it makes them faint-hearted and despondent. But the Gospel banishes fear, by revealing a Mediator, the Son of God, and filling the soul with an assurance of the mercy of God. By *rivers flowing with water*, the prophet means the wonderful spread of the Gospel, and the rich fruit it will produce. As dry places are barren, and well watered ones fertile, so where the Gospel resounds, the richest and ripest fruits are produced. The Holy Spirit goes with it, imparting his own divine gifts.

[Pusey: As the fountain gushes forth from the hill or mountain side in one ceaseless flow, day and night, streaming out from the recesses to which the waters are supplied by God from his treasure-house of the rain, so day by day, in sorrow or in joy, in prosperity or adversity, God pours out in the Church, and in the souls of his elect, the riches of his grace. The love of God shall stream through every heart; each shall be full according to its capacity, and none the less full, because a larger tide pours through others. All the powers, capacities, senses, speech of the saints who *confess God* shall flow with a perennial stream of joy, thanksgiving, and jubilee, as of all pleasure and bliss. — F.]

Ver. 19. *Shed innocent blood*. How highly does the Lord esteem the death, the blood of the faithful!

[Henry: The innocent blood of God's people is very precious to Him, and not a drop shall be shed, but it shall be reckoned for. — F.]

Vers. 20, 21. *Judah shall dwell forever*. The Church of the New Covenant is imperishable, for it shall be transplanted from time into eternity. Blessed Zion! in which the Lord dwells with his Word, and the gifts of his Spirit, and which He quickens by his converting and sanctifying power. Let us make here for ourselves tabernacles, and serve this great King of hearts in the obedience of faith, so that we may at last be transferred to the heavenly Jerusalem. O, the depth of the riches, of the wisdom, and of the knowledge of God! Of the riches of grace, since God, in spite of the unbelief and disobedience of his people, has not forgotten them, nor abrogated his covenant. Of the wisdom, which turns so many hindrances into the means of helping forward his own purposes. Of the knowledge which has foreseen and with absolute certainty has predicted all these things. Learn from Israel, the courageous trust thou mayest have in the mercy of God, even though thou shouldst lie beneath his heavy hand, as long as Jerusalem has lain in her ruins. Learn that the wisdom of God can never fail, nor be at fault, and yield thyself in all circumstances to his wise guidance. When something happens to thee unexpectedly, and destroys some hope which you may have fondly cherished, call to mind and consider the truth, that "known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world."

[Henry: It is promised that the Church shall be very happy. Three things are here promised it.

1. *Purity*. That is put last here as a reason for the rest (ver. 21). But we may consider it first as the ground and foundation of the rest. *I will cleanse*, etc.

2. *Plenty* (ver. 18). That is put first because it speaks the reverse of the judgment threatened in the foregoing chapters. The streams of this plenty overflow and enrich the land.

3. *Perpetuity*. This crowns all the rest. As one generation of professing Christians passes away, another shall come, in whom the throne of Christ shall endure forever.

Robinson: The last days are at hand, when the wicked shall be driven away in their wickedness, and a fiery deluge of wrath shall overwhelm the earth, but they who love the Lord shall be removed, as Lot, to a mountain of safety, and like Noah, be hidden in an ark of salvation, until the desolation and the tyranny be overpassed. Wherefore, dear Christian brethren, lift up your hearts, and long for his coming, for you shall be his in that day when He makes up his jewels.

> Jesus, thy Church with longing eyes
> For thy expected coming waits:
> When will the promised light arise,
> And glory gleam from Zion's gates?
>
> Teach us in watchfulness and prayer
> To wait for the appointed hour;
> And fit us by thy grace to share
> The triumphs of thy conquering power. — F.]

Prayer suggested by the whole Chapter. — Great Saviour! we thank Thee that Thou wilt one day judge the enemies of Thy Church, and wilt recompense their persecutions and abominations on their own heads. Grant that their further wicked designs may not injure Thy Zion. Arise and punish them; deliver Thy faithful ones, and be their refuge and fortress amid the judgments which shall overtake the world of the ungodly. Adorn Thy Zion with the rich gifts of Thy Spirit, that it may be holy before Thee, and ever overflow with spiritual blessings. Amen.

THE

BOOK OF AMOS.

EXPOUNDED

BY

OTTO SCHMOLLER, PH. D.,

URACH, WÜRTEMBERG.

TRANSLATED AND ENLARGED

BY

TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D. D.,

ONE OF THE PASTORS OF THE COLLEGIATE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH, NEW YORK.

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THE PROPHET AMOS.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *The Personal Relations of Amos.*

Of these we know more than we do in the case of Hosea and of Joel, and that, not merely from the superscription, the originality of which needs yet to be established, but also from the prophet's own words (chap. vii. 10–15). First of all occurs the name, עָמוֹס. It may be mentioned in passing that the fathers, ignorant of Hebrew, confounded this name with אָמוֹץ, that of the father of Isaiah, and supposed the two persons to be one and the same; but Jerome denied the assertion. The meaning of the name is uncertain, perhaps = *Bearer*, or *Heavy*. His home was certainly, according to ch. vii. 10 ff., in the kingdom of Judah. He labored indeed in Ephraim, but this was considered strange by Amaziah, who reproved it as an insolent undertaking and bade him escape to Judah, so that manifestly, he did not reside in Bethel nor anywhere in Israel. The superscription puts his residence in Tekoa, a town in the tribe of Judah, often mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament (2 Sam. xiv. 2; 2 Chron. xi. 6, xx. 20; Jer. vi. 1; also 1 Mac. ix. 33), and said by Jerome to be some miles south of Bethlehem, where its ruins are still preserved in the modern name of Tekua.

Here, according to ch. vii. 14, Amos was a בּוֹקֵר, which naturally, according to its derivation, means *herdman*. But the 15th verse states that Jehovah took him from following הַצֹּאן, and this word signifies sheep and goats in distinction from neat-cattle, so that the term herdman must be considered as used in a wide sense and including a shepherd's office. This is confirmed by the account of Tekoa given by Jerome, who knew the holy land from personal observation, and whose statements in his preface to our prophet, are therefore not to be regarded as mere inferences from this passage. He says that the country was sandy and barren, and therefore full of shepherds who made amends for its failure to yield crops by the number of their flocks. That there were many shepherds in the place is indicated by the title, in its saying that Amos was "among the נֹקְדִים of Tekoa" (מִתְּקוֹעַ meaning, perhaps, those who had gone out *from* Tekoa to more distant pastures). The term נֹקֵד occurs besides this place only in 2 Kings iii. 4, where it is applied to the Moabitish king, Meshah, who in this capacity paid to the king of Israel a yearly tribute of 100,000 lambs, and as many rams. Accordingly it signifies a sheep-master. We may therefore regard Amos as an owner of flocks, but by no means as a wealthy sheep-owner. This is determined by what he says of himself (ch. vii. 14, 16), according to which he was a shepherd, and took care of the sheep, even if they were his own. But this phrase "among the shepherds of Tekoah," may refer merely to his residence, and so indicate his employment while he was living among these persons. He further calls himself בּוֹלֵס שִׁקְמִים, one who cultivated sycamores for his support. This tree by its sweet fruit (Pliny, *N. H.*, xiii. 14, calls it *prædulcis*) which it bears abundantly, afforded to a shepherd living in the open country a nutriment both ample and easily provided. So that Amos had a competent support, although he was not rich. Accordingly, in ch. vii. 12, etc., he rejects the summons to go to Judah and eat his bread there, on the ground that he did not prophesy for bread but had a competency of his own, implying also perhaps that as a shepherd he was satisfied with simple fare.

Here now as he abode among his flocks the call of the Lord reached him to prophesy concerning Israel. For he says expressly that he was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, *i. e.*, a pupil of the prophets, which excludes any thought of a school in which he had pre-

pared himself for the work, or even that he had assumed it as a calling. In obedience to the summons he repaired to Bethel, the chief seat of the idol worship, in order to announce to the careless people the divine judgment. There the priest Amaziah sought to drive him away, as a seditious person. But he boldly resisted, and made his threatening still more severe. It is not stated whether he then went away or whether he continued his prophetic function. All that we further know of him is that his discourses were reduced to writing. Later traditions of his martyrdom have no historical value.

§ 2. *The Age of the Prophet.*

This in substance is well settled. For the book itself names Jeroboam (II.) as the king under whom Amos prophesied in Bethel. This king ascended the throne in the fifteenth of the twenty-nine years' reign of Amaziah, king of Judah; and reigned forty-one years. He was therefore fourteen years contemporary with Amaziah, and twenty-seven years with his successor Uzziah. The title puts Amos in the last two thirds of Jeroboam's reign, since it represents him as prophesying in the days of Jeroboam and Uzziah, *i. e.*, while they were contemporary; and this is confirmed by the statement in ch. ix. 12 that "the remnant of Edom should be possessed," indicating that the Edomite capital, Selah, had already been conquered, which took place under Uzziah's father Amaziah (2 Kings xiv. 7). The time of the prophet's activity cannot be more closely defined within these twenty-seven years; only it is certain that it did not extend over the whole period, but was confined to a certain occasion. The title indicates this by the note — "two years before the earthquake." This would give us the precise date, if only we knew the time of the earthquake; but this not being the case, we gain nothing by the statement. It only confirms the view that Amos prophesied in the reign of Uzziah, for we have every reason to believe that this earthquake was the same with the one mentioned in Zechariah xiv. 5, which is there said to have occurred under Uzziah. (As to the object of this note, see below, ch. i. 1.)

Amos was somewhat earlier than Hosea, but still the latter was his contemporary, and carried on his work (undoubtedly using his materials, see below) of announcing judgment upon Ephraim, in a still more threatening manner and with a clearer indication that Assyria was to be the instrument of this judgment. On the other hand, Amos was younger than Joel, whose writings were known to him when he composed his own, since he expressly refers to them, adopting Joel's words in his commencement (ch. i. 2), and leaning upon them in the promise with which he concludes (ch. ix. 13).

The period of Amos's ministry was one of great external prosperity for the kingdom of Israel. Under Jeroboam II. it stood at the zenith of its power. Compare the picture of the rich who seek only the increase of their wealth and luxury, and feel so entirely secure. Certainly, as this picture directly shows, there was under this outward pomp and prosperity a deep moral decay which stood in close connection with the apostasy from pure religion. In Judah the case was different, but even there matters had become worse since the time of Joel. For Amos openly complains of a contempt of God's law and an inclination to idolatry, of which we find no trace in Joel. Israel, however, had sunk deep in corruption, yet no one either perceived or was willing to learn of any danger, all were in careless security. No political signs indicated any danger from a foreign foe. The Assyrians, indeed, attracted attention, but there was no probability that they would endanger the kingdom. It was too strong for that. And as to the danger resulting from inward moral decay, that was not apprehended, because men either disbelieved in a retributive, sin-avenging righteousness, or else excluded the thought of it from their minds. At this time the simple shepherd of Tekoa was sent into the kingdom of Israel to announce to it, and especially to the house of Jeroboam, God's judgment and their own downfall, as he says, ch. vii. 15. Any one who had a living faith in God and therefore in a divine retribution, might well conclude from a glance at the defection from a true faith and worship and the prevailing moral corruption, that such a people and kingdom were on the downward road and would fare ill. But it was a long step from this to the public announcement of a certain overthrow by a foreign conqueror. Just this is found in Amos; he does not indeed name the foe, but no one can mistake who is meant. Thus he showed himself possessed of a special revelation from God, as he expressly said in ch. vii. 15. Although no one thought particularly of Assyria, for which reason he does not name it, still he already saw in that kingdom the instrument of God's vengeance and so declared.

§ 3. *The Book of the Prophet.*

Under the name of this prophet we have a prophetic writing in nine chapters, containing chiefly threatenings against the kingdom of Israel, to which, on account of its prevailing grievous sins, it announces a grievous infliction, even overthrow by a hostile nation. Still the book is not limited to threatenings against Israel, but at least begins with threats upon the surrounding heathen, and then, like a genuine prophetic book, concludes with the promise of a new deliverance for Israel and a splendid prosperity under the house of David.

Entering more into detail, we are to consider —

1. The first and second chapters as a sort of introduction to the particular subject.

The second verse of chap. i. repeats a menace contained in Joel iv. 16, and then the nations around Israel are taken up in order, first the heathen, Damascus (i. 3–5), Philistia (6–8), Tyre (9–10), Edom (11, 12), Ammon (13–15), Moab (ii. 1–3), and then Judah (4–5), against each of which the divine wrath is announced in short, similar sentences, even "for three transgressions and for four," and is executed by "kindling a fire" in their capitals. Then the threatening turns to Israel, at first in the same phrase as before, but soon at greater length. There is a fuller detail of the prevailing sins, oppression of the poor, and lascivious luxury, together with a gross contempt for God's favors toward them as his people (6–12); and a fuller announcement of punishment, namely, complete subjugation under an invading foe (13–16). It is thus evident that the previous denunciations were intended only to pave the way for this one, and that Israel was especially aimed at, for which reason the prophet dwells on their case. Still the threatening is here only introduced, and the judgment is declared merely in general terms; the form of its fulfillment can only be conjectured.

2. The special charges and threats follow in chaps. iii.–vi. This division contains four discourses, — the first three of which begin with a "Hear this word" — in which the kingdom of Israel, especially the great men, on account of the prevailing sins, are threatened with a divine judgment in the shape of the destruction of palaces and sanctuaries, the overthrow of the kingdom, and the carrying away of the people, unless by seeking the Lord they seize the only hope of deliverance.

(a.) In chap. iii. the chief thought is manifestly that there should be no doubt about the coming of the judgment, since the prophet who bore Jehovah's commission could not speak in vain.

(b.) Chap. iv. bases the assurance of punishment on the fact that all previous visitations of God had been to no purpose, since repentance had not ensued. The judgment therefore *must* come.

(c.) In chap. v. we hear the outcry at approaching calamity, intermingled with calls to seek the Lord and love the good, as the only means of escape. It concludes with a woe pronounced upon those who desire the day of the Lord, which yet for them must be a day of terror, since all idolatry is an abomination to him. Then is added in —

(d.) Chap. vi., a woe upon those who on the contrary fancy the day of the Lord to be far off and therefore persevere in their frivolity until the judgment overtakes them by means of a people whom the Lord will raise up.

After these discourses about punishment comes a new division, —

3. Chaps. vii.–ix., in which the prophet recounts certain *visions* in which he has seen the fate of Israel, interspersed with historical details and threats of punishment, but at last passing into the promise of a new deliverance and prosperity for Israel.

(a). Chap. vii. First, the prophet has two visions of punishment by Locusts and by Fire, which, however, are averted at his intercession. So much the more does the third vision, of the Plumb-line, show the downfall of the kingdom, and especially of the house of Jeroboam to be irreversible (1–9). The result of this announcement is that the priest Amaziah complains of Amos to the king and proposes his banishment. But Amos boldly meets him, affirms the divine call under which he was acting, and utters a still sharper threat, aimed especially at the priest.

(b.) Chap. viii. A fourth vision represents the ripeness of the people for judgment under the image of a basket of ripe fruit. Then the prophet commences with "Hear this" (as in chaps. iii., iv., v.), a denunciation of the sins of the higher classes, who are threatened with the sore grief of a famine of hearing the word of the Lord.

(c.) In a fifth vision the prophet sees under the image of an overthrow of the temple (at Bethel) which buries all in its ruins, the utter ruin of the kingdom by a divine judgment which none can escape; since God is almighty and Israel is not a whit better than the heathen (i. 7). Yet God will not destroy it entirely, but sift it by destroying all the sinners at ease, and then raise again David's fallen tent to a new glory. Thus the book concludes with the promise of a new deliverance under the house of David, when Israel will be richly blessed, and made as great and powerful as ever before, and never again be driven out of the land.

That the book whose contents are thus outlined forms one complete whole, can scarcely be disputed. But to press the inquiry closer, it is at once evident that chaps. i. and ii. are intimately connected, and in like manner chaps. iii.–vi. belong together. But that the latter division concurs with the former to make one whole is equally clear. A menace of judgment upon Israel could not possibly be satisfied with what is said in ii. 13–16, for in that case there would be no definiteness and certainty as to what Israel was to expect. The further statements in the following discourses are a matter of necessity. Moreover, a comparison of ii. 6–8 with iii. 9, 10, v. 7, 11, vi. 4, shows a striking similarity between the sins censured in both cases. The unity of the first six chapters is then established. As to chaps. vii.–ix., no argument is needed to show their mutual coherence. But the question arises, whether they did not originally form an independent whole which a subsequent editor appended to the foregoing, or conversely made the foregoing a preface to it. There is much to favor its independent character. It differs from what precedes, both in matter as containing visions, and in form, as the prophet speaks in the first person. Notwithstanding, its close connection — at least in the state in which we now have it — with chaps. i.–vi., is unquestionable. The chief evidence of this seems to me to lie in chap. viii. 4 *seq.;* which bears an unmistakable relation to what is already found in chaps. iii.–vi. The reproof is the same in both. Compare the introductory words "Hear ye;" the censure of sins in viii. 4, etc., with ch. ii. 6, etc, and ch. v. 11, 12; and also, the announcement of judgment in viii. 10 with ch. v. 15. So close is the correspondence that one might be tempted to think that the latter passages were a subsequent insertion, which of course would destroy the argument for the original coherence of the whole. But we can hardly assume this theory of insertion by an editor, simply because the words, viii. 4, etc., are somewhat abrupt and do not seem to be exactly in their place. If an alteration were made, we should suppose they would have been taken away from their present place and joined to the foregoing passages, to which they seem more suited. Here applies the critical canon that the more difficult reading is to be preferred. But then it is to be observed that the conclusion, (ix. 11, etc.,) undeniably reëchoes the conclusion of Joel, and still more does ch. i. 2 connect itself with Joel. This fact shows beyond mistake that our book in its present state originated from one hand, and farther, since its beginning and its end are original, integral elements proceeding from the author himself, that we must consider the book as a complete whole, as certainly so prepared by its author.

If this be so, it follows that the prophet Amos, who in chap. vii. speaks of himself in the first person, is necessarily the composer not merely of the account of these visions, but also of the whole book. If at first we understood from the superscription that the substance of these utterances proceeded from Amos, much more must we suppose that they were reduced to writing and united with the foregoing books by him; and we must consider the superscription as prefixed to this, as it undoubtedly will, and of right ought to be, considered. That he who in ch. vii. says "I" is no other than Amos, is plain from verse 10, etc., where he is so called, but that he is here spoken of in the third person is no evidence that he is not the author. Of the portions marked with the "I," both preceding and following, he is certainly such, but we need not for that reason consider the intervening passage vii. 10–17 as inserted by another; for Hosea, in the beginning of his prophecy, in the portion (chap. i. 2) which undoubtedly is his own, also speaks of himself in the third person. Besides, the transition to the third person here is altogether simple and natural, since he was repeating what Amaziah charged against him. And having thus spoken, he continues in the same manner in the 12th and 13th verses. Moreover, since the subject relates to the personal experiences of the prophet, there is the less reason for considering it another's interpolation in a writing the rest of which was composed by Amos. No, it is Amos alone who relates what befell him in his prophesying, and then speaks of his origin and his mission, and afterwards utters a new menace against Amaziah. And this is not added as a mere matter of

history, but the account of the occurrence with Amaziah bears so directly upon this speech to him that it is perfectly plain that the author of the one is the author of the other, *i. e.*, that the prophet himself, and no one else, has produced the whole. In favor of Amos's authorship is the style, in which are manifold reminiscences of a pastoral life. (See below.) In the first instance, this proves only that the separate discourses came from Amos, but not that he composed the whole. But since after what has been said the theory of its compilation by a third person is inadmissible, the argument for Amos as the author is greatly strengthened by these peculiarities of language. Besides, we could not properly speak of "Discourses of Amos" which another person has collected together, but the book in its present form is to be considered as an original composition of its author, based upon the "discourses" he had delivered orally.

This leads to the question concerning the precise origin of the book, — which is not answered by determining that it is a consistent whole and was the work of Amos. For here, more than in the other prophets, do we need to understand the relation of the book to the public, oral activity of the prophet.

A public and therefore oral announcement of prophecies against Israel is expressly ascribed to Amos. Just for this purpose he who was originally a herdsman came forth as a prophet. The question is, What were those oral prophecies, and how were they related to our book? Ewald and Baur assume that chaps. vii.–ix. 10, contain what was originally said at Bethel, and that the first part, chaps. i.–vi. and the Messianic conclusion, are only a written statement, devised by Amos after his return from Bethel to Judah, in order to make his utterances effective for a wider circle. This view is quite plausible: for thus is most easily explained the difference in form between the first part and the second, and also, the singular interruption of the prophecies by a historical narration, ch. vii. 10, etc. One is inclined, besides, to think that the herdsman of Tekoah first received in the form of visions the divine revelation and the command, "Go, prophesy to my people Israel" (vii. 15); and that the longer discourses are an afterthought belonging to the written statement. But even if, as we shall see, there is some weight in the latter consideration, still we cannot accept the entire view as correct. The report of the three visions in chap. vii., of which two contained the prophet's intercession and a consequent respite of judgment, and only the third was a pure menace, could not possibly have provoked the interference of Amaziah against the prophet. He speaks of "all his words" which the land is not able to bear, and gives a summary of them in the 11th verse. But manifestly he here states only the point to which the words of Amos in verse 9 seemed to him to tend, and which in his view proved that he was aiming at a conspiracy. But the language of the priest presupposes that the prophet had spoken much more than the single menace contained in the third vision. Or may we assume that, even if these visions contain all that was then said in Bethel, he had yet formerly declared there the other visions recorded in chaps. viii. and ix., before Amaziah came forward against him? His coming forward would then be accounted for. But, — as Baur himself rightly emphasizes, though to prove the opposite — it is not consistent to regard as supposititious the passage which now contains the historical narrative (verse 10 ff.), because it is not conceivable that it should have been interpolated here, where at first it seems to make confusion, unless it had originally belonged just to this place. This being so, "all the words which the land was not able to bear" must be found in the preceding chapters. And there is the less objection to this, since among the discourses certainly made in Bethel, there is one (ch. viii. 4 ff.) which, as was before said, is closely related to the discourses in the first part.

As there are no external grounds for limiting the discourses at Bethel to chap. vii., so there are no internal reasons. For there is here merely a threatening of punishment, but no mention of sin as the cause of the judgment, except ch. viii. 4–6, and still less any call to repentance, founded either upon God's mercies to Israel, especially the divine call of the nation, or upon earlier warnings and visitations. Yet without this we cannot conceive of a prophetic menace of punishment. Even had the prophet begun with pure threatening, yet this must afterwards at least have been accompanied with explanations and reasons; but, as has been said, these are almost entirely wanting in ch. vii. ff. But they occur in the first part, and therefore the threatening visions in the second part certainly presuppose the existence of the former. Moreover, I think the traces of oral speech in the discourses of the first part can hardly be mistaken; *e. g*, in ch. iv. the mention of former visitations and their inefficacy — "yet have ye not returned unto me;" or in ch. v., the warnings: "Seek the

Lord;" or the reproach of empty formal worship, ver. 21, etc. The references to Joel also, *e. g.*, ch. v. 18, may well have belonged to the oral utterances. On the other hand, we naturally do not find in our book, Amos's oral addresses either in substance or form as they were originally delivered. It was only the essential portion which he reduced to writing, and the form manifestly belongs to the prophecy only as written. It is vain therefore to attempt now to distinguish the particular portions that were spoken. They are merged in a new composition prepared in a free independent manner. But while they furnish the principal points treated, manifestly it is to the written statement that we owe the introduction in chaps. i. and ii., so far at least as foreign nations are concerned, therefore as far as ii. 5, and in like manner the concluding promise of a new deliverance in ix. 11.

The threatenings in ch. i. against other nations pave the way to the chief theme, the announcements of wrath against Israel. And then again these announcements to Israel pave the way to the promise of a new gracious visitation by which God will show that Israel is still his people.

This leads us to consider the *aim* and *motive* of the preparation of our book. Its fundamental thought, the appearance of Amos at Bethel with his testimony against Israel, does not explain why it was written. It furnished indeed the chief materials, but had the writing intended only to preserve these from being lost, it would have simply reproduced them in a somewhat free form; but it had also another aim of its own, and to reach this availed itself of the oral utterances without confining itself to them. The appearance of Amos as a prophet of wrath to Israel is sufficiently explained by the commission, "Go, prophecy to my people, Israel," but not his appearance as the author of our book. To understand this we must fix our eyes upon the portions not belonging to his personal ministry, — the introduction and conclusion, and especially the references to Joel's writings. Since Amos begins his book with the menace announced by Joel in iv. 16, and concludes it with a promise like that of Joel in iv. 18, his whole prophecy, as it were, falls between these two verses and is framed out of Joel's menace and Joel's promise. Joel, as we have before shown, knew only of a divine judgment upon the heathen in the Lord's day for the deliverance and exaltation of Judah, for when he afterwards saw the latter threatened with a judgment, he also saw it averted by repentance. This writing of Joel was widely diffused. But gradually its terms came to be perverted, and its promise of salvation was made a pretext for careless security (see ver. 18, where the day of the Lord is regarded as necessarily a day of salvation for Israel). Even among those who highly prized the prophets, the non-arrival of the threatened day of the Lord with its judgment upon the heathen, and consequently the non-arrival of the glorious salvation for Israel after that judgment, might awaken a mistrust of the prophetic declarations, and even indifference and unbelief (cf. Baur, pp. 61, 113). Therefore Amos now confirms Joel's prophecy and at the same time extends it in accordance with the altered circumstances. Both Joel's threatening and his promise remain true, but no longer so separated that the former applies only to the heathen, and the latter to Israel because of their repentance. The threatening remains true against Israel's foes, the heathen, nay, in chaps. i., ii. 5 is executed, cf. "I will not turn it away;" but certainly this is no longer the prominent feature. Judah itself has become guilty, is filled with idolatry, and is therefore threatened with a divine judgment. Especially in the kingdom of Israel, to which Joel does not allude, has sinful corruption reached so high a point that the herdsman of Tekoah is expressly commissioned to announce God's wrath to this large division of the covenant people. So little justification had Israel for their carnal confidence in their divine vocation upon the ground of Joel's prediction of a judgment upon their foes, so far was his threatening of the Lord's day of judgment from passing away, that it would certainly come to pass, only in a broader range and still more incisively, since the Lord would enter into judgment with his degenerate people, — which even Joel had, according to chaps. i. and ii., considered not improbable, and even had feared for Judah, although the degeneracy there was not so great as in Israel, but now thought that it was averted by serious repentance. But as Joel's threatening remains true, so also does his promise for Israel, especially for Judah, only it is brought about by a judgment upon Israel, so far as it had departed from God's ways, and therefore had become the sinful kingdom of Israel, — a judgment by which "a chastisement but at the same time a purification is introduced." The judgment is like a storm which overwhelms and desolates, but at the same time purifies, and therefore carries a blessing in its bosom by making room for the clearer light of the sun. Perhaps it is in reference to this that Amos begins with the words of Joel iv. 16, where the

Lord's coming forth to judge is represented under the figure of a tempest, a violent convulsion of nature.

Here may be quoted the manner in which Schlier (*Minor Prophets*, p. 70) strikingly presents the contents of our book from this point of view: "This little book is wonderfully arranged. With a single word Joel rouses Amos; it is as it were the text of his whole prophecy, the substance of all his utterances; and what he declared was the thundering voice of God's judgment upon his people. A frightful storm comes down on Israel; we see the lightnings flashing hither and thither from one people to another till at last the gloomy storm-clouds stand over Israel and discharge themselves upon their guilty heads. But finally after fearful bursts, the tempest passes away, and the pure blue heaven comes out over the people of God. This is the sum of our prophecy. We see a storm issuing from the Lord with all his terrors, but also with all his blessing, in which it at last terminates. What Amos as a herdsman had heard and seen in the open country with his herds, he as a prophet brings before our spiritual vision with marvelous fidelity."

We have sought to deduce the aim of the prophecy from the express references to Joel. But perhaps we have an indication of its outward motive in the note of time with which the title concludes — "two years before the earthquake." If these words came from Amos himself (see on ch. i. 1), they inform us at once of the time of the composition, namely, after the earthquake, and also of the time of the public delivery of the prophecies, namely, two years before that event; thus showing that they were distinct from each other. But the presumption is natural that these words indicate not only the period but the motive of the composition, namely, the occurrence of the violent earthquake. That event announced a sore judgment from God. And just as the plague of the locusts induced Joel to sound his call to repentance, since he regarded it as the beginning of the day of the Lord, so this earthquake led Amos — not, indeed, to his predictions of wrath, for these had occurred before — but to record them at length. For he had in his oral utterances announced a heaving of the earth as an expression of God's wrath; and now the earth did heave. What then was more natural than that he should see in this a confirmation of his threat, a token of its fulfillment; and regard the occasion as an appropriate one for addressing his contemporaries in writing, as he had before done orally, in a somewhat enlarged form, especially by the introduction and the conclusion, and with a reference to Joel for the reasons already mentioned? We may even find an external reason for the close connection with Joel iv. 16 in this earthquake, since it would appear to Amos as an outward confirmation of Joel's prophecy, and he could have said to his contemporaries: You hear the fulfillment of Joel's words, how God who dwells in Zion "roars and utters his voice" — for the earthquake must have been accompanied with a tempest. God himself having thus spoken on behalf of his prophet, so much the more should a second prophet deem it his duty and his right, to confirm in the enlarged and completed form before mentioned, his predecessor's prophecies already diffused among his contemporaries, but partly misapplied and partly discredited; and in order to this end, to record and publish his own discourses.

From what has been said, the *significance* of our prophet plainly appears. Of fundamental importance here is Joel's work, by its precise and sharp apportionment of punishment and deliverance — the former to Israel's foes, the latter to Israel as God's chosen people. The final result is imperishable salvation and glory for God's people, and overthrow and destruction for his foes, the world. But while this ultimate issue is held fast, it is endeavored to show to God's people God's seriousness, and to set clearly in the light the distinction between the true and the degenerate members of the people, especially to give a death-blow to the false and wicked boasting in the prerogatives of a divine vocation, while there was a total failure of the character belonging to that vocation, in short, to an arbitrary appropriation of the divine grace. This step in advance is taken by Amos when he turns the avenging sword of the Spirit against Israel itself, and declares that it, just so far as it resembles the Heathen in conduct, is in like manner exposed to the divine judgment. Still he holds high the banner of hope. The judgment is one of purification. As true as it is, on the one hand, that Israel will not be spared, so true is it, on the other, that Israel will not be destroyed — that Jehovah still has purposes of mercy for this nation, who are and will remain his people.

Thus we find in Amos the prophetic theme made more profound and incisive. It cuts Israel to the quick, and so strikes the note which succeeding prophets carry on, first, his younger contemporary, Hosea, who with all the weight of prophetic earnestness and with a

glance taking in at once the entire condition of the people, announces God's judgment on the kingdom as upon an unfaithful adulterous wife. And as in Amos, and still more in Hosea, the judgment does not spare Judah, so Micah and Isaiah go farther and mention Judah as especially exposed to it. But so much the more fully do they set forth the salvation which God has prepared and devised for his people. He remains faithful, his love is unchangeable; and ever clearer and more certain stands before their eyes the form of the Messiah, in whom God's love and faithfulness find their concrete expression.

The influence of the book of Amos upon the course of prophecy is shown by the use made of him, especially by Hosea. Compare Hos. viii. 14 with Am. ii. 5 (i. 4, 7, 10, 12, 14, ii. 2); Hos. xii. 10 with Amos ii. 10; Hos. xii. 8 with Am. viii. 5; Hos. ix. 3 with Am. vii. 17. The later prophets, especially Jeremiah, show a considerable dependence upon Amos: compare Jer. xlix. 27 with Am. i. 4; xlix. 3 with i. 1, 15 (xlvi. 6 with ii. 14); xlviii. 24 with i. 12, ii. 2; xlix. 13, 20–22 with i. 12; farther, xxv. 30 with i. 2; xxxi. 35 with iv. 13, v. 8, xliv. 2 with ix. 4, 8. But particularly in his prophecies upon foreign lands does Amos appear the forerunner of the later prophets.

As to the *style* of our prophet, Jerome indeed calls him "rude in speech but not in knowledge," not, however, as a reproach, but in allusion to 2 Cor. xi. 6, in order to show, as Baur says, that while as a herdsman he was not acquainted with the formal rules of rhetoric, the inward force of his mind made good the lack of outward dexterity. Compare Augustine (*De Doct. Chr.*, iv. 7), "For these things were not composed by human industry, but were poured forth by the divine mind both wisely and eloquently, wisdom not aiming at eloquence, but eloquence not departing from wisdom." And Lowth (*De Sac. Poesi Heb.*) justly remarks upon the assertion that Amos is rude, ineloquent, and unadorned, "Far otherwise! Let any fair judge read his writings, thinking not who wrote them, but what he wrote, and he will deem our shepherd to be *in nowise behind the very chiefest* prophets; in the loftiness of his thoughts and the magnificence of his spirit almost equal to the highest, and in splendor of diction and elegance of composition scarcely inferior to any." Yes, his style is such that although we emphasize the agency of the illuminating Spirit of God, still on the other hand we must allow to the prophet no small degree of natural culture, without, however, thinking of a learned education. It was rather a cultivation originated by conversance with the Law and with the holy books, and fostered by religious instruction and a religious mind, such as would befit a man of the people to whom by all means applies the saying, It is the heart that makes eloquent. We do not refer here to the sharp, piercing seriousness of Amos, for this belongs more to the substance than the form of a prophet. On the other hand, we may point to the soaring elevation of the speech, *e. g.*, in the delineations of God, ch. iv. 13, v. 8, ix. 5, 6; to the peculiarly bold and vivid diction, stroke upon stroke, in describing the judgments, chaps. i. and ii., or in the complaints in ch. iv. on account of the failure to repent. But as Amos has an intuitive power of individualizing his conceptions which often imparts a poetical coloring to his speech, so his style hovers between prose and poetry, and forms a peculiar kind of prophetic utterance. See ii. 6–8, 13; iii. 3; v. 16, vi. 3, 4; ix. 2, 13. Herein the diction is little distinguished by depth of thought, but so much the more does it display a transparent clearness which in many cases is increased by the symmetry of the arrangement, as in the entire introduction, and again in the fourth chapter, and in the visions. Observe also the commencement of each of the three discourses, chaps. iii., iv., and v., with the phrase "Hear ye," and the twofold "Woe," in chaps. v. 18 and vi. 1, by which the larger divisions are denoted.

When in conclusion we emphasize the imagery of the book, this leads to a more general observation. In the view of what has been said, one might doubt the composition of this work by a mere shepherd, but on the other hand it is very noticeable how reminiscences of a shepherd-life everywhere appear. Justly has Ewald remarked (*Proph.*, i. 117): "The simple circle of country life has entirely filled his imagination; nowhere else among the prophets do we find rustic images given with such originality and vividness and inexhaustible abundance. Not merely do the numerous comparisons and particular images, but also the minutest lines of the conceptions and the expression exhibit the peculiar experience and intuition of this prophet." Of detailed instances Baur in his Commentary gives the fullest collection; of these we cite only a portion. Amos refers almost all things to the sphere of a countryman. Chaps. iv. 6–9; v. 16; iii. 15; v. 11 (country-seats of the great); ii. 8; iv. 9; v. 11, 17; vi. 6, ix. 14 (vineyards). His images also are taken from the experiences of country life. Chaps. ix. 13; i. 2; iv. 13; v. 8, 18, viii. 9 (an eclipse of the sun is to a shep-

herd a natural image); ii. 9, 13; iii. 4, 5, 8; v. 19; viii. 13; iii. 12; ix. 5; vi. 12. As a plain shepherd, Amos particularly dislikes the dissoluteness of luxurious cities (chaps. ii. 6; iii. 10; iv. 1; v. 10; vi. 4), especially when it is based upon usurious dealings in grain to oppress the poor (ch. viii. 8, comp. with vi. 7). Since the contemplation of the starry heavens belongs characteristically to a shepherd living in the open air, Amos prefers to represent God's majesty and power by his mighty workings in nature. Chaps. iv. 13; v. 8; viii. 9; ix. 5.

A peculiar mode of writing many words may be attributed to the fact that the author "came not from Jerusalem, the centre of the culture of the time" (Ewald), *e. g.*, מֵעִיק for מֵצִיק (ii. 13), מְתָאֵב for מתעב (vi. 8), בושם for בוסס or בּוֹשְׁשׁ (v. 11), מסרף for משרף (vi. 10), ישׂחק for יצחק (vii. 16). [Pusey says, The like variations to these instances in Amos are also found in other words in the Bible. On the whole we may *suspect* the existence of a softer pronunciation in the south of Judæa, where Amos lived; but the only safe inference is, the extreme care with which the words have been handed down to us, just as the Prophet wrote and spoke them."]

[The influence of the shepherd-life of Amos appears most in the sublimest part of his prophecy, his descriptions of the mighty workings of God. With those awful and sudden changes in nature, by which what to the idolaters was an object of worship was suddenly overcast and the day made dark with night, his shepherd-life had made him familiar. The starry heavens had often witnessed the silent intercourse of his soul with God. In the calf, the idolaters of Ephraim worshipped "nature." Amos then delights in exhibiting to them his God, whom they too believed that they worshipped as the creator of "nature," wielding and changing it at his will. All nature too should be obedient to its maker in the punishment of the ungodly, nor should anything hide from Him (viii. 8, ix. 2, 3, 5). The shepherd life would also make the prophet familiar with the perils from wild beasts which we know of as facts in David's youth. The images drawn from them were probably reminiscences of what he had seen or met with. . . . . The religious life of Amos amid the scenes of nature, accustomed him as well as David, to express his thoughts in words taken from the great picture-book of nature, which as being also written by the hand of God, so wonderfully expresses the things of God. When his prophet's life brought him among other scenes of cultivated nature, his soul so practiced in reading the relations of the physical to the moral world, took the language of his parables alike from what he saw or what he remembered. He was what we call "a child of nature," endued with power and wisdom by his God. It is a mistake to attribute to him any inferiority even of outward style, in consequence of his shepherd life. Even a heathen has said, "words readily follow thought;" much more when thoughts and words are poured into the soul together by God the Holy Ghost. On the contrary, scarcely any prophet is more glowing in his style, or combines more wonderfully the natural and moral world, the omnipotence and omniscience of God (iv. 13). What is more poetic than the summons to the heathen enemies of Israel to people the heights about Samaria and behold its sins (iii. 9)? What more graphic than that picture of utter despair which dared not name the name of God (vi. 9, 10)? What bolder than the summons to Israel to come, if they willed, at once to sin and to atone for their sin (iv. 4)? What more striking in power than the sudden turn (iii. 2), "You only have I known; *therefore* I will punish you for all your iniquities;" or the sudden summons (iv. 12), "Because I will do *this* unto thee (the silence as to what the *this* is, is more thrilling than words), prepare to meet thy God, O Israel?" Or what more pathetic than the close of the picture of the luxurious rich, when having said how they heaped luxuries one upon another, he ends with what they did *not* do; "they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph?" — Pusey.]

§ 5. *Literature.*

Besides the works referring to the Prophets in general, chiefly the Minor Prophets, El. Schadæi, *Comm. in Amos Prophetam.* Argent., 1588. Joa. Gerhardi, *Adnot. in Proph. Amos et Jonam*, etc., Jenæ, 1663 and 1676. *Amos Propheta expositus*, etc., cura Jo. Ch. Harenbergii. Ludg. Batav., 1763. *Amos, translated and explained*, by J. G. M. Dahl, Gottingen, 1795. *Amos, translated and explained*, by K. M. Justi, Leipzig, 1799. *Amos, translated and explained*, by J. Sam. Vater, Halle, 1810. *The Prophet Amos explained*, by Fr. G. Baur, Giessen, 1847. [Horsley, *Notes*, in *Bib. Crit.*, ii. 391.]

For Practical Exposition. — Among earlier writers, *The Severe Preacher of Repentance and Prophet Amos, in Sermons of* P. Laurentius, Superint. in Dresden, Leipz., 1604. Among the later, J. Diedrich, *The Prophets* (*Daniel, Hosea, Joel*) *Amos, briefly explained*, etc., Leipzig, 1861.

⁂ The additions made by the translator are in some instances marked with the letter C., but for the most part are simply inclosed in square brackets. Justice to Dr. Schmoller requires that this statement should be made. — C.

AMOS.

CHAPTERS I., II.

The Superscription (ch. i. 1).

1 The words of Amos (who was among the shepherds of Tekoa), which he saw concerning Israel, in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.
And he said:—

I. *The Divine Judgment is announced first against the Countries lying around Israel, then against the Kingdom of Judah, but at last remains standing over the Kingdom of Israel* (chaps. i. 2–ii. 16).

2 Jehovah roars out of Zion,
And out of Jerusalem he utters his voice
Then the pastures of the shepherds wither
And the head of Carmel is dried up.

(*a*) *Damascus* (vers. 3–5).

3 Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of Damascus
And for four — I will not reverse it —
Because they threshed Gilead with iron rollers,

4 I will send fire into the house of Hazael,
And it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

5 And I will shatter the bolt of Damascus,
And cut off the inhabitant from the vale of Aven,
And the sceptre-holder out of Beth-Eden;
And the people of Syria shall go into captivity to Kir, saith Jehovah.

(*b*) *Gaza* (vers. 6–8).

6 Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of Gaza,
And for four — I will not reverse it —
Because they carried away captives[1] in full number[2]
To deliver them up to Edom,

7 I will send fire into the wall of Gaza,
And it shall devour their palaces.

8 And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod
And the sceptre-holder from Ashkelon;
And I will turn my hand against Ekron
And the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord, Jehovah.

(c) *Tyre* (vers. 9, 10).

9 Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of Tyre,
And for four — I will not reverse it —
Because they delivered prisoners in full number to Edom,
And remembered not the brotherly covenant,

10 I will send fire into the wall of Tyre
And it shall devour their palaces.

(d) *Edom* (vers. 11, 12).

11 Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of Edom,
And for four — I will not reverse it —
Because he pursues his brother with the sword,
And stifles his compassion,[3]
And his wrath continually tears in pieces,
And his anger endures forever,[4]

12 I will send fire into Teman
And it shall devour the palaces of Bozrah.

(e) *Ammon* (vers. 13–15).

13 Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of the sons of Ammon,
And for four — I will not reverse it —
Because they ripped up the pregnant women of Gilead,
To enlarge their border,

14 I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah,
And it shall devour their palaces,
With a war-shout in the day of battle,
With a storm in the day of the whirlwind.

15 And their king[5] shall go into captivity,
He and his princes together, saith Jehovah.

Chapter II.

(f) *Moab* (vers. 1–3).

1 Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of Moab
And for four — I will not reverse it —
Because it burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime,

2 I will send fire into Moab,
And it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth,
And Moab shall die in the tumult,
With a war-shout, with a trumpet-blast;

3 And I will cut off the judge[6] from the midst thereof,
And will slay all his princes with him, saith Jehovah.

(*g*) *Judah* (vers. 4, 5).

4 Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of Judah,
And for four — I will not reverse it —
Because they despised the law[7] of Jehovah,
And kept not his commandments,[7]
And their lies misled them,
After which their fathers walked;

5 I will send fire into Judah,
And it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

(*h*) *Israel* (vers. 6–16)

6 Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of Israel
And for four — I will not reverse it —
Because they sell the righteous for money,
And the needy for[8] a pair of shoes;

7 They who pant after the dust of the earth upon the afflicted,
And pervert the way of the sufferers;
And a man and his father go in to the same girl
In order[9] to profane my holy name:

8 And they stretch themselves upon pawned clothes by every altar,
And they drink the wine of the punished[10] in the house of their God.[11]

9 And yet[12] I destroyed the Amorite before them,
Him who was as high as the cedars
And as strong as the oaks;
And I destroyed his fruit from above
And his roots from beneath.

10 And yet I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
And led you in the wilderness forty years,
To inherit the land of the Amorite;

11 And I raised up of your sons prophets,
And of your young men dedicated ones.
Is it not so, ye sons of Israel? saith Jehovah.

12 But ye made the dedicated ones drink wine,
And commanded the prophets, saying, "Prophesy not."

13 Behold, I will press you down[13]
As the full[14] cart presses the sheaves.

14 Then shall flight be lost[15] to the swift,
And the strong shall not confirm his strength,
And the hero shall not save his life.

15 He that beareth the bow shall not stand,
And the swift-footed shall not save, —
And the rider of the horse shall not save his life,[16]

16 And the courageous one among the heroes,—
Naked shall he flee away in that day, saith the Lord.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Chap. i. ver. 6.—גָּלוּת, lit., *exile;* but usually concrete, *exiles.*

2 Ver. 6.—שְׁלֵמָה, *complete*, therefore in full number = *all the prisoners.*

3 Ver. 11.—וְשִׁחֵת depends upon עַל, which continues in force as a conjunction.—שִׁחֵת, *destroys* = *stifles his compassion* = *acts mercilessly.*

4 Ver. 11.—וְעֶבְרָתוֹ may be rendered, *and his wrath lies in wait forever*, namely, to perpetrate cruelties. [So Ewald; but Keil justly objects that the verb, applied to wrath in Jer. iii. 5, means to keep, preserve, and that lying in wait is inapplicable to an emotion.] שְׁמָרָה for שְׁמָרָהּ, the accent being drawn back because of the tone-syllable in the following word, נֶצַח. [Ewald and Green make עֶבְרָתוֹ a nominative absolute, and suppose an omitted *mappik* in the last letter of the verb, so as to translate, "and it keeps its wrath forever."]

[5 Ver. 15.—מַלְכָּם. Some of the Greek versions, followed by the Syriac and Jerome, give the form Μαλχομ, Melchom, as a proper name, but the common text is sustained by the LXX. and Chaldee, and required by the connection.]

6 Chap. ii. ver. 3.—שׁוֹפֵט analogous to תּוֹמֵךְ שֵׁבֶט, in i. 5, 8, is simply a rhetorical variation for מֶלֶךְ.

[7 Ver. 4.—תּוֹרַת = God's law, his preceptive will in general. חֻקִּים = the separate precepts, whether ceremonial or moral.]

8 Ver. 6.—בַּעֲבוּר is not synonymous with בְּ, *pretii*, but means on account of. Fürst, Keil, etc. [Pusey and Wordsworth adopt the former view.]

9 Ver. 7.—לְמַעַן, not "so that," but, "in order that," indicating that the sin was practiced not from weakness or ignorance, but a studious contempt of the Holy God.

10 Ver. 8.—עֲנוּשִׁים: *punished in money*, i. e., fined, as in the margin of the Auth. Version.

11 Ver. 8.—אֱלֹהֵיהֶם, not their gods, *i. e.*, idols [as Henderson], but their God.

[12 Ver. 9.—The repetition of the personal pronoun אָנֹכִי, here and in ver. 10, is very emphatic, equivalent to our English phrase, "It was I who," etc.]

13 Ver. 13.—הֵעִיק, *to enclose, compress, crush*, תַּחְתֵּיכֶם, Keil renders "down upon you" = crush you. [So Winer, Gesenius, Ewald.] Fürst takes the word here and elsewhere as a substantive, meaning *place, position*, and renders, "I will compress your standing-place." The pressure is compared to that of a cart. According to the usual explanation, the cart is further defined as full of sheaves. But in that case it is strange that the pressure of a full cart should be used to represent the destructive crushing here intended. A more appropriate comparison is found in the pressure by which a threshing cart threshes the sheaves. It is better therefore to take עָמִיר as the object, and to refer הַמְלֵאָה לָהּ to עֲגָלָה = the full threshing cart, since such a cart is always conceived of as heavily laden. The explanation of Fürst is forced. He supplies עַל גֹּרֶן, to which he refers the adjective, so as to render "upon the floor full of sheaves."

14 Ver. 13.—הַמְלֵאָה לָהּ, *lit.*, "which is full in itself, has quite filled itself."

[15 Ver. 14.—אָבַד מָנוֹס. The same combination is found in Ps. cxlii. 4.]

16 Ver. 15.—נַפְשׁוֹ belongs to both members of the verse.

17 Ver. 16.—אַמִּיץ לִבּוֹ = "the strong in his heart," *i. e.*, "the courageous."

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. *The Superscription.* **The words of Amos.** The expression is somewhat unusual. It is customary to state the contents of a prophecy as "*the word of Jehovah*" which came to this one or that one, as in the first verse of Hosea, Joel, Micah, etc. Jeremiah uses the same phrase as Amos, but adds expressly, "*to whom the word of Jehovah came.*" Here also the divine inspiration of "*the words of Amos*" is put beyond doubt by the addition, **which he saw**, for חָזָה is the technical formula to denote the prophet's immediate intuition of divine truth. His "*words*" therefore originated in such an intuition, and were not the outflow and expression of his own thoughts. He "saw" first what he afterwards recorded, and this seeing rested upon a divine revelation. Upon the addition to the prophet's name, **who was among**, etc., see the Introduction, § 1.

Upon Israel. The peculiar aim of the prophet's utterances is the kingdom of Ephraim; but this came into view only in so far as it was a kingdom of Israel, and contained a part—in extent a greater part—of the people of Israel. Besides, the threatenings extend to the kingdom of Judah, therefore to all Israel. Moreover, it must be considered that these threatenings terminate in the promise after their execution of a new glorious Israel, in which no account is taken of the existing division of the kingdom. As to the note of time **in the days of Uzziah**, etc., see the Introduction, § 2, where it is shown to be correct according to the contents of the book.

Two years before the earthquake. See also the Introduction. This date is not so much chronological as argumentative. It is inserted in reference to chap. viii. 8 (also ix. 5), since this earthquake occurring two years after the prophesying, was a declaration in act that God would make good the words of his servant. As to the genuineness of the entire superscription, no argument against it is to be found in the statement "who was among the herdmen," etc., and especially the expression "**who** *was;*" or if indeed this statement is not original,

it might yet have been inserted in a superscription otherwise genuine. In favor of this view is the above-mentioned unusual character of the phrase "words of Amos which he saw." It is scarce conceivable that a later editor would use this expression rather than the customary one, "The word of the Lord which came," etc. If then the words "two years before the earthquake" are cited, as by Baur, as a proof of spuriousness, because if genuine the prophecy must have been written two years after Amos's appearance in Bethel, while its whole character shows that it was written soon after that event, we answer that this latter assertion is wholly unfounded. Nothing forbids the opinion that two years, which is no great space of time, elapsed before the record was made, and besides we have before shown that the book is by no means a mere record of the oral discourse. On the other hand, even Baur himself must admit that the precise date and the peculiar form of the superscription presuppose in any event its composition not long after the prophecies were delivered. Surely he who prefixed these words did it in reference, as above stated, to its bearing upon the subject of the prophecies following. And as there is nothing against the authorship of Amos, it is most natural to think that he who suggested the reference recorded it. Besides, we have already seen (Introduction, § 3) that there is reason to believe that the earthquake induced Amos to write his prophecies; indeed, he perhaps refers to it in verse 2. Certainly then nothing is more natural than to assume that he himself contributed this note of time, and thus indicated the inducement which led him to write.

Chap. i. ver. 2. **Jehovah roars out of Zion,** etc. Comp. Joel iv. 16. Amos connects himself directly with Joel in describing the judgments upon the heathen as enemies of God's people. For even from ver. 3, he announces the divine wrath upon all the surrounding nations. But suddenly the denunciation turns to Judah, and then to Israel, where it remains standing, so that it is plain that he aimed especially at Israel, and that the threats against the heathen which seemed to be most important, served only for an introduction to what follows. This appears even in the verse before us, since he applies the phrase borrowed from Joel differently from that prophet, namely, against Israel, for since the drying up of Carmel is stated to be the result of God's wrath, "the pastures of the shepherds," which are said to wither, are to be referred to Israel. "Woods and pastures are mentioned by Amos in accordance with his peculiar mode of characterizing the country." Or, we are to assign the "meads of the shepherds" to the pasture grounds of the wilderness of Judah, which was the prophet's home in the south, and to this Carmel stands opposed on the north, so that Amos sees the whole land from south to north withered. The "withering" means generally destruction, not to be limited to mere drought as a natural occurrence, although this is not excluded, but extending to the devastation of a foreign foe, as the later statements require.

From ver. 3 begin the threatenings against the heathen — in the way of a preface. The storm of divine wrath rolls around the outlying kingdoms, until it comes to a stand on Israel. The heathen kingdoms mentioned in their order are six: Syria (Damascus), Gaza, or rather all Philistia (ver. 8), Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab. These manifestly constitute two groups, three in each. For the three first are more distant from Israel, the latter nearer, as allied in origin. The ground of their punishment is stated to be their transgressions, especially against Israel; they come into view, therefore, as enemies of God's people, and as such are threatened with wrath. In the succession of the groups we see a climax of guilt, since naturally the ill-doing of a kindred people is worse than that of a foreign race. Upon this ground the question, why just these were selected, answers itself. It was these from whom Israel had severely suffered, and their guilt lay in the foreground. They are then representatives of a class; a threatening upon such grounds proclaims the guilt of a similar course of action generally — wherever it may be found.

See further, in respect to the bearing of menaces against the heathen upon menaces against Israel, in the Doctrinal and Practical Remarks.

2. *Damascus — Syria*, vers. 3–5. **Thus saith Jehovah; for three transgressions,** etc. It is peculiar that the threatenings throughout both chapters are always introduced in the same manner. The phrase "for three — and for four," is well explained by Hitzig, who says: "The number four is added to the number three, to characterize the latter as simply set down at pleasure, to say that it is not exactly three but much more." Three would be enough, but it is not limited to three. The plurality is not rigidly defined, on purpose to indicate the ever increasing number of sins. These nations therefore have incurred not a light but a heavy degree of guilt. — The עַל with which the threatening begins is in each case repeated before the special transgression mentioned, and this latter, being a single case, seems to conflict with the preceding plurals. But in truth the commencement, having firmly asserted the plurality of the sins, may well allow the subsequent address, as it hastens from one people to another, to be content with naming a single wrong act as a flagrant example which necessarily presupposes the existence of many others. The phrase interposed in each case — **I will not reverse it,** *i. e.*, the punishment decided upon — cuts off every thought of repeal, and declares the execution to be inevitable. In every case the judgment is described as a sending of fire to consume the palaces, which can mean only the fire of war, conquest, and destruction. **Because they threshed,** refers to the cruelty with which they crushed the captured Gileadites under iron threshing-machines. This occurred when Palestine east of the Jordan was subjugated by Hazael under the reign of Jehu (2 Kings x. 32, 33, cf. xiii. 7. — **Benhadad**; was it the first of that name, or the second? Probably both. **Shatter the bolt,** *i. e.*, of the gate = the conquest of Damascus. The inhabitants of the valley of Aven and the sceptre-holder, *i. e.*, prince or ruler, of Beth Eden, are extirpated. — בִּקְעַת אָוֶן, *lit.*, valley of nothingness, is probably the modern Bekaa, the valley between Lebanon and Antilibanus, of which Heliopolis (*Baalkek*) was the most distinguished city. אָוֶן, then perhaps = אוֹן, the name of the Egyptian Heliopolis, whence the LXX. render πεδίον Ὤν; but designedly written in the former method to play upon the idol worship performed there (cf. בֵּית־אָוֶן for בֵּית־אֵל).

בֵּית־עֶדֶן, either the modern Bet-el-Ganna, not far from Damascus, or, better, the Παράδεισος, in the district of Laodicea (Ptol. v., 5, 20). The rest are to be carried away to Kir, an Assyrian province, on the banks of the River Kir, Κῦρος, the modern

Georgia. This was fulfilled by Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings xvi. 9).

3. *Gaza — Philistia.* Vers. 6–8. Gaza stands as a representative of the other Philistine states which are similarly threatened, and is named first, perhaps because it was most actively engaged in the sale of the captives (Keil). There is perhaps an allusion to the same case which Joel mentions (iii. 6). Although Joel speaks of a sale to the Grecians, and Amos of a sale to Edom, there is no discrepancy, for both occurred. Joel mentions the Greeks, because he sought to set forth the wide dispersion of the Jews and their future recall from all lands; but Amos wishes to emphasize the hatred of the Philistines, and therefore speaks of the sale made to Israel's chief foe, Edom. Why Gath is not named, does not appear. Doubtless it was comprehended under the phrase "remnant of the Philistines."

4. *Tyre — Phœnicia.* Vers. 9, 10. The crime here is the same as in the preceding, namely, the sale of prisoners to Edom. But it does not include carrying them away, therefore they must have bought them from others and then sold them. Hence Joel says that the Philistines sold the prisoners whom they captured to the Greeks. But the Phœnicians as a trading people may just as well have bought from others, such as the Syrians, and sold the captives thus acquired to Edom. Their sin here was the greater, because David and Solomon had made a "brotherly covenant" with the king of Tyre. The threatening in ver. 10 is limited to the commencement of what is denounced upon Damascus and Gaza. The same is true of Edom and of Judah.

5. *Edom.* Vers. 11, 12. No particular crimes are here charged, but an implacable hatred against Israel, which broke out in acts of cruelty. Teman is either an appellative, the South, or the name of a province in Edom (cf. Jer. xlix. 20; Hab. iii. 3; Job ii. 11; Ezek. xxv. 13). Eusebius and Jerome speak also of a city named Teman, six hours from Petra. **Bozra,** probably the capital of Idumæa, south of the Dead Sea, still preserved in the village of el-Buseireh in Jebâl.

6. *Ammon.* Vers. 13–15. The fact stated here is not mentioned in the historical books of the Old Testament. **Rabbah,** in its full form, Rabbah of the Sons of Ammon, the capital of the Ammonites, is preserved in the ruins of *Amman*. The destruction here threatened is more closely defined. It will take place through a foreign conquest which is compared to a storm, indicating either its speed or its violence.

7. *Moab.* Chap. ii. vers. 1–3. The burning of the body into lime, *i. e.*, to powder, indicates the slaking of vengeance even upon the dead. Nothing is said of this in the historical books, but it was perhaps connected with the war waged by Joram of Israel and Jehoshaphat of Judah, together with the king of Edom, against the Moabites. In that case the king of Edom was a vassal on the side of Israel, and the insult to him would be, at least indirectly, a crime against Israel. **Kerioth** is the proper name of a chief city of Moab, still preserved in the place called *Kereyat.* מֵת is applied to Moab, considered as a person. Here also the occurrence of a battle is mentioned. **Judge,** used only to vary the expression, is equivalent to *king*, or *sceptre-holder* in i. 5. **From the midst** refers to Moab as a country.

8. *Judah.* Vers. 4, 5. The sin of Judah consists in apostasy from God. **Their lies** means their idols, as nonentities, destitute of reality.

9. *Israel — the Ten Tribes.* Vers. 6–16. Now in a surprising manner Israel is brought forward, and by a similar introduction placed on the same line with the others; only in place of a short statement, there is a lengthened and detailed representation of its sin, guilt, and punishment.

(a.) *Israel's Sins.*

Vers. 6–8. Unrighteousness in judgment is charged, ver. 6. **The righteous** = one who is such in the judicial sense, *i. e.*, innocent. **Money,** which they had received or expected. **Sell,** declare guilty and punish. The sentence is called a sale because the judge was bribed. The phrase, **for a pair of shoes,** does not state the price with which the judge was bribed [the poorest slave was certainly worth much more than this — Keil], but the occasion of the proceeding, namely, a pair of shoes, *i. e.*, a mere trifle, for which the poor man was in debt and for which the judge gave him up to the creditor as a slave (Leviticus xxv. 39).

Ver. 7. **They who,** etc. Plainly, not a new fault, but a description of the sin out of which the former sprang. **Pant after the dust,** etc., *i. e.*, endeavor to bring these into such misery that they will strew dust on their heads, or that they will sink into the dust, *i. e.*, perish. **Pervert the way,** etc., prepare for them embarrassments and distress. **Son and father go in to the** (*i. e.*, one and the same) **girl. In order to profane my holy name.** The conjunction indicates that the profanation was deliberate and therefore willful. It is so called because it was an audacious violation of God's commandments. Prostitution in or near the temple itself is not to be thought of here.

Ver. 8. **Every altar** and **the house of their God,** certainly refer to the sacred places at Beersheba and Dan, but it must be kept in mind that in these Jehovah was worshipped. There is no reference to the worship of heathen deities, which indeed did not exist under Jeroboam II., for the conduct here condemned is condemned just because it took place in the sanctuary, and thus was a daring contempt of God. **Pawned clothes,** *i. e.*, upper garments consisting of a large square piece of cloth, used also as a bed-covering by the poor. These were pawned, given in pledge to a creditor, by the poor. Such the law required to be returned before nightfall (Exod. xxii. 25; Deut. xxiv. 12). But instead of this, they were retained, and used as cloths on which the creditors stretched out, *i. e.*, their limbs; and on what occasion? According to what follows, at banquets or sacrificial meals, as the connection shows. **Wine of the punished,** means wine bought with the proceeds of fines. Manifestly the oppression of the poor is censured also in ver. 8. It only connects with this sin that of frivolous luxury.

(*b*). The sin is the more heinous because Israel is the chosen people of God.

10. Vers. 9–12. These verses recall to mind the manifestations of God's grace. He had put Israel in possession of Canaan. Here Amos mentions first the direct means by which this was done, namely, the destruction of the Canaanites, then, what preceded, namely, the deliverance from Egypt and the guidance through the wilderness. **And I** — emphatic, the very being whom you now treat with contempt. The Amorites are named as the strongest race of the Canaanites (cf. Gen. xv. 16; Josh. xxiv. 15); they are likened to a mighty tree, and their destruction to its complete overthrow. A similar reference to these gracious dispensations is found in Deut. viii. 2, ix. 1–6, xxix. 1–8. Further, the gift of prophecy and the insti-

tution of the Nazarites are mentioned as special favors which God had given to Israel but which they despised.

(c). *The Punishment.*

This is to be a crushing so severe that no one can escape. The figure of the cart is explained in Textual and Grammatical.

Ver. 14. **Flight is lost to the swift** = he will not have time to escape.

Ver. 16. **Will flee naked** = will not defend himself, but leave behind the garment by which the enemy seizes him (cf. Mark xiv. 52). The punishment threatened in ver. 13 ff. is manifestly the invasion of a superior foe. The powerlessness before him and the consequent fright are depicted in the liveliest manner.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. In Joel, prophecy quickly drops the form of a threatening against God's people which however it certainly has, and then assumes so much the more fully the character of a promise. It is altogether different with the next prophet of whom we have any written memorial, as indeed would be expected from the fact that his mission was to the ten tribes. On one side he stands connected with Joel, but on the other goes far beyond him; his message is not only the earnest calling of a degenerate people to repentance, but the annunciation of God's destructive judgments upon them. But the transition from Joel's point of view to that of Amos is worthy of consideration. The former announced a judgment upon the heathen, but in general terms. This the latter takes up with a slight allusion to Israel, but he does not expand it farther until he has paved the way by a succession of threatenings upon foreign nations. He unrolls before the eyes of Israel a picture of the Divine Justice in its sure and awful march through the kingdoms. But if the people at first regard this with satisfaction because it concerns their foes upon whom they will thus be revenged, they are frightfully awakened from their security by a sudden turn in the direction of the menace. Israel itself is counted among these Gentile kingdoms, and treated in the same way. This shows that the address to Israel's foes is only an introduction; and therefore it passes rapidly from one to another, not entering into details, but content with indicating the multitude of their transgressions, and citing one only as an example of the rest. The prophet thus prepares to make the stroke which at last falls upon Israel heavier and more lasting. Were those nations punished? Not less will this one be. Did they suffer who had not received the law nor enjoyed special tokens of God's favor; far heavier will be the punishment of this people who, although chosen of God, had yet in the grossest manner despised Him and his well-known commands. The storm of divine wrath, which they had gazed at as it fell upon others, would discharge itself upon them in all its fury.

Thus does God prick the conscience of his own people by the judgments threatened upon others. They hear his voice saying, "If I thus punish others, what must I do to you?" The more generally and widely his punishment is inflicted, the less can Israel complain when it comes to them; much rather must they acknowledge it as just.

To Israel in the stricter sense an especial warning is given in the fact that the divine judgment in its circular sweep does not spare Judah, and even names this before Israel. "It should sink deep into the heart of the ten tribes that not even the possession of such exalted prerogatives as the temple and the throne of David, could avert the merited punishment. If such be the energy of God's righteousness, what had *they* to expect? (Hengstenberg.) That is, the ten tribes might at first hear gladly, and even feel flattered by a threatening against Judah, but so much the more surprising must it be when the same thing comes in turn to themselves. Then the matter assumes a different appearance, and they could infer from Judah's not being spared, how little they could count upon any exemption.

2. Returning to the judgments upon the heathen, the question arises, Why were they punished? One might answer without ceremony, Because of their offenses against Israel, the people of God. Undoubtedly these nations are considered as Israel's foes, and their crimes so far as specified are crimes against Israel; in part they are the same as those charged by Joel, who speaks so plainly of the hostility of the heathen toward Israel. Only in the case of Moab (ii. 1), is the fact otherwise, for here the offense stated is one only indirectly against Israel. But this shows that the relation to Israel is not the only point of view, and that the threatenings against these nations are not to be attributed solely to this cause; a view which is confirmed by a closer inspection of the sins mentioned; crushing with a threshing sledge, giving prisoners to embittered foes (Edom), forgetting the brotherly covenant, slaying a brother, stifling compassion, ripping the pregnant, displacing the landmarks, burning the bones of a corpse. These are plainly moral offenses, trangressions of the simplest laws of morals. They are therefore sins against a natural divine ordinance, not positively revealed, but manifesting itself in every one's conscience; and as such they incur a heavy guilt. The crimes of these nations then are against God and not merely against his people. So much the more necessary is it for God to punish them.—And He can do this because He is a God who controls all nations, and to whom all are subject even if they do not serve Him. Observe how self-evident this truth is to the prophet. Does not this assumed universality of the power of Israel's God imply indirectly, or at least negatively, that faith in Israel's God is destined for all? Under one God, who has power over all, all shall yet bow themselves.

3. Hence it is the more conceivable that Judah and Israel are joined so directly to the threatened heathen nations. Judah, it is concisely said, has not kept the law, in which God positively declared to them his will. To Israel, on the contrary, nothing is said here of the sin of idolatry (which indeed is presupposed), but individual offenses of a gross kind (partly of course allied with idolatry), are specified; base oppression of the poor through avarice, shameless sensuality, spending in drunkenness money wrested from the poor, and this most offensively blended with idol-worship. How this is regarded is strikingly shown by an expression at the end of verse 7 which applies to the whole series. It is, says God, a profaning of my holy name. In the view of Scripture there is a holy divine ordinance which is violated by such moral offenses. They are therefore offenses against God, "profanations of his holy name," who instituted this ordinance. Therefore the punishment is absolutely necessary. For God cannot suffer his holy name to be profaned with impunity. Upon the sins against the poor, see also Doctrinal and Ethical, 2, upon chap. iii.

4. It is remarkable that the very same threat is made against the heathen and against Judah. This is certainly not without design. Even if it were owing in the first instance to the fact that the prophet had in view one and the same means of punishment for all, namely, subjugation by a foreign foe, still the intentional uniformity suggests equally the unvarying and impartial character of God's punitive righteousness. There is no respect of persons with Him. Wherever there are sins, there inflexibly the divine wrath makes its appearance; and even if the sins are different in kind, yet where God's law whether natural or revealed, is transgressed, there a corresponding reaction of his holiness is provoked.

5. Surely the greatness of what God has done *for his people* weighs heavily in the scale and greatly aggravates their guilt. The fact of these benefits is the solid ground of the proceeding against Israel's sins. Those benefits are so many loud accusations, from which there is no escape. For all Israel's sins are not merely violations of a divine order, but a shameless contempt of his goodness and the blackest ingratitude; and the punishments therefore are only a righteous reversal of abused mercies. Hosea goes farther and represents the ingratitude as conjugal infidelity, since he conceives God's tender relation to Israel as a marriage bond. The infliction of punishment upon apostate Israel is thus more clearly shown to be a divine right. An approach to this view, an indication of God's loving fellowship with Israel is found in chap. ii. 2: "You only have I known," etc.

6. Along with the great blessings which founded the nation — the deliverance from Egypt, and the guidance through the wilderness, and on the other side, the giving of the law, — the institution of prophecy, and the law of the Nazarites are mentioned. "These are gifts of grace in which Israel had the advantage of other nations, and was distinguished as the people of God and the medium of salvation for the heathen. Amos reminds the people only of these, and not of earthly blessings which the heathen also enjoyed, because these alone were real pledges of God's gracious covenant with Israel, and because in the contempt and abuse of these gifts the ingratitude of the people was most glaringly displayed. The Nazarites are placed by the side of the prophets who declared the mind and will of God, because the condition of a Nazarite, although it was in form merely a consequence of his own free will in execution of a particular vow, was nevertheless so far a gift of grace in that the resolution to make such a vow came from the inward impulse of the divine Spirit, and the performance of it was rendered possible only through the power of the same Spirit. The raising up of the Nazarites was intended not only to set before the eyes of the people the object of their divine calling, or their appointment to be a holy people of God, but also to show them how the Lord bestowed the power to carry out his object" (Keil); cf. also the remarks on Hosea xii. 10, which rests on this passage in Amos.

7. Whether these threatenings against different heathen nations were *fulfilled*, is a question we must ask still more in the case of Amos than of Joel. For Amos not merely sees and describes in a general ideal sketch the downfall of the heathen power which then stood opposed to Israel's exaltation, but he speaks as if predicting a precise historical occurrence. Yet it is to be considered, that, as was hinted before, the threatening runs essentially in the same terms, is in fact *one*, and, although subjoining special features in some cases (especially i. 5, 15), yet at bottom is very general, and sets forth simply conquest and loss of independence, but by whom, is not said. Just this fate befell these kingdoms, although at different times and in different ways. Syria experienced it from the Assyrians when Tiglath-Pileser, in the time of Ahaz, conquered Damascus and put an end to the kingdom. Later, the Chaldæan invasion overthrew the other nations, although the information on the point is scanty. Accordingly we are always justified in saying that these predictions were fulfilled, without necessarily affirming that it was in the sense intended by the prophet. [But this latter is a point of no moment, if the fulfillment was in the sense which the Holy Spirit intended. — C.] We must further consider that such threatenings are not absolute. They are given at a particular time, and the issue depends upon the behavior of those whom they concern. For God's purposes, and therefore his punishments are directed according to our conduct. Hence He delays his visitations, or lessens or increases them; so that what takes place at last little coincides with what the prophet had to announce in his name. Nor should the idea be wholly rejected, that these predictions came to the foreign nations themselves, seeing that they were neighbors, and were laid to heart by them just as the heathen oracles were, so that thus the state of affairs might be changed. For these announcements of punishment are to be viewed as warnings as well to the heathen as to Israel — warnings intended to be heard and regarded. That the threatening against Judah, which is of the same tenor as the others, was fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar, is well known. But even this fulfillment does not answer exactly to what the Prophet had in view, which manifestly was a judgment closer at hand, perhaps by means of the Assyrians. Hence it is clear that Judah obtained a respite, because its condition had meanwhile improved.

[8. It is remarkable that none of these *burdens* of Amos are addressed to the greatest powers of the heathen world, opposed to Israel and Judah, — Assyria and Babylon. The Holy Spirit who spake by him, reserved the declaration of the destinies of these two great kingdoms for two other of the twelve minor prophets. Assyria was reserved for Nahum, Babylon for Habakkuk. There seems, therefore, to have been divine forethought in the omission. . . . . The prophecies of Amos are expanded by succeeding prophets. Amos himself takes up the prophecy of Joel whom he succeeds. Joel, by a magnificent generalization, had displayed all God's judgments in nature and history as concentrated in one great Day of the Lord Amos disintegrates this great whole, and particularizes those judgments. Joel declares that God will judge all collectively; Amos proclaims that He will judge each singly. (Wordsworth.)

[9. Pusey (p. 161), with great propriety, calls attention to the fact that the complete captivity of a population, the *baring* a land of its inhabitants, was a thing unknown in the time of Amos. It is true, Sesostris brought together "many men," "a crowd," from the nations he had subdued, and employed them on his buildings and canals (Herodotus, ii. 107–8). But in this and other like cases, the persons so employed were simply prisoners made in a campaign, and the sole object of the removal was to obtain slaves so as to spare the labor of the native subjects in constructing the public works. This is shown by the earlier Assyrian inscriptions, all of which speak only of carrying off

soldiers as prisoners or women as captives, of receiving slaves, or cattle or goods as tribute, or of putting to death in various ways rulers and men at arms. The forced deportation of a whole people, and the substitution of others in their place, is a different thing altogether. The design of this was to destroy effectually the independence of the subject races and put it out of their power to rebel. The first trace of it we find in the policy of Tiglath Pileser toward Damascus and East and North Palestine, and afterwards it came into general use. But Amos foretold this wholesale transportation long before it occurred, and at a time when there was no human likelihood that it would occur. It must have been a divine inspiration which enabled him so clearly to predict such an unprecedented captivity. — C.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 2. *The head of Carmel is dried up.* Its glory has passed away, as in the twinkling of an eye. God hath spoken the word and it is gone. "All," says Van de Velde, "lies waste; all is a wilderness. The utmost fertility is here lost for man, useless to man. The vineyards of Carmel, where are they now? Behold the long rows of stones on the ground, the remains of the walls; they will tell you that here where now with difficulty you force your way through the thick entangled copse, lay in days of old those incomparable vineyards to which Carmel owes its name." (Pusey.) — Ver. 3 ff. Every infliction on those like ourselves finds an echo in our own consciences. Israel heard and readily believed God's judgments upon others. It was not tempted to set itself against believing them. How then could it refuse to believe of itself what it believed of others like itself. If they who sinned without law perished without law, how much more should they who have sinned in the law, be judged by the law. (*Ibid.*) — *For three transgressions*, etc. God is long-suffering and ready to forgive; but when the sinner finally becomes a vessel of wrath, He punishes all the former sins which for the time He had passed by. Sin adds to sin out of which it grows; it does not overshadow or obliterate the earlier sins, but increases the mass of guilt which God punishes. When the Jews slew the Son, there came on them all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from righteous Abel to Zacharias the son of Barachias. So each individual sinner who dies impenitent, will be punished for all which in his whole life he did or became contrary to the law of God. Deeper sins bring deeper damnation at last. As good men by the grace of God, do through each act done by aid of that grace gain an addition to their everlasting reward, so the wicked by each added sin, add to their damnation. (*Ibid.*) — *I will not reverse it.* Sin and punishment are by a great law of God bound together. God's mercy holds back the punishment long, allowing only some slight tokens of his displeasure to show themselves that the sinful soul or people may not be unwarned. When He no longer withholds it, the law of his moral government holds its course. (*Ibid.*) — Ver. 4. *Devour Benhadad's palaces.* What avail the pleasure-houses and palaces of the rich of this world? How soon do they turn to dust and ashes when the fire of God's wrath kindles on them? — Ver. 6. *Carry away prisoners to deliver them*, etc. Who so further afflicts the afflicted, shall in return be afflicted by God. Fugitives who flee to us for refuge should never be treated with hostility nor robbed of their liberty. — Vers. 7, 8. The five cities of Philistia had each its own petty king. But all formed one whole; all were one in their sin; all were to be one in their punishment. So then for greater vividness, one part of the common infliction is related of each, while in fact, according to the wont of prophetic diction, what is said of each is said of all. — Ver. 9. *Remember not*, etc. It is a great aggravation of enmity and malice, when it is the violation of friendship and a brotherly covenant. (M. Henry.) — Ver. 10. *Fire into the wall of Tyre.* Not fine buildings nor strong walls, but righteousness and honesty are a city's best defense. 2 Kings ii. 12; xiii. 14. — Ver. 11. *Pursues his brother with the sword.* Eleven hundred years had passed since the birth of their forefathers, Jacob and Esau. But with God eleven hundred years had not worn out kindred. . . . . It was an abiding law that Israel was not to take Edom's land, nor to refuse to admit him into the congregation of the Lord. Edom too remembered the relation, but to hate him. "Fierce are the wars of brethren." (Pusey.) — *Stifles his compassions.* Edom "steeled himself against his better feelings," as we say, "deadened them." But so they do not live again. Man is not master of the life and death of his feelings, any more than of his natural existence. He can destroy; he cannot recreate. And he does so far do to death his own feelings whenever in any signal instance he acts against them. (*Ibid.*) — Ver. 13. *To widen their border.* The war of extermination was carried on not incidentally nor in sudden stress of passion, but in cold blood. A massacre here and there would not have enlarged their border. They wished to make place for themselves by annihilating Israel that there might be none to rise up, and thrust them from their conquests and claim their old inheritance. Such was the fruit of habitually indulged covetousness. Yet who beforehand would have thought it possible? (*Ibid.*) — Ver. 15. *He and his princes.* Evil kings have evermore evil counsellors. It is ever the curse of such kings to have their own evil reflected, anticipated, fomented, enacted by bad advisers around them. They link together, but to drag one another into a common destruction. (*Ibid.*) — Chap. ii. 1. Even the iniquity done to the godless, God will not leave unpunished. To rage against the bodies of the dead is sinful and horrible. Pusey justly remarks, "The soul being beyond man's reach, the hatred vented upon one's remains is a sort of impotent grasping after eternal vengeance. It wreaks upon what it knows to be insensible the hatred with which it would pursue, if it could, the living being who is beyond it. Hatred which death cannot extinguish is the beginning of the eternal hate in hell." — Chap. i. 3–ii. 3. Who shall not tremble at the judgments of God? But who shall not gain confidence against all the insolence of men, from the thought how God has judged the world? Who shall not shun all rage, cruelty, and violence, since he knows that God avenges all such sins? — Ver. 4. *Because they despised the law*, etc. Many other sins prevailed among the Jewish people, but by mentioning only these two, — contempt for the law and false worship, — the Lord shows that they are the most grievous, since they violate the first and great commandment, and make up the three and four, *i. e.*, seven, the complete number of sins, the fullness of the measure of iniquity. For it is one of God's greatest benefits that He gives us his Word containing the revelation of his will and thus points the way not only to our temporal wel-

fare but to eternal blessedness. To throw to the winds such a gift is the grossest ingratitude. From this contempt of the Word, there follows necessarily the other sin of idolatry. For a man cannot exist without a God and worship; his nature forbids it. If any one turns aways from the Word in which God reveals his nature and will, he must needs devise to himself a deity and a worship which is nothing but a pernicious lie. — *Despised.* The prophet uses a bold word in speaking of man's dealings with God. Man carries on the serpent's first fraud, *Hath God indeed said?* He would not willingly own that he is directly at variance with the mind of God. It were too silly as well as too terrible. So he smoothes it over to himself, *lying* to himself: "God's Word must not be taken so precisely." "God cannot have meant." "The author of nature would not have created us so if He had meant." Such are the excuses by which man evades owning to himself that he is trampling under foot the mind of God. Scripture draws off the veil. Judah had the law of God and did not keep it; then he *despised* it. This ignoring of God's known will and law and revelation is to despise them as effectually as to curse God to his face. (Pusey.) — *After which their fathers walked.* The children canonize the errors of their fathers. Human opinion is as dogmatic as revelation. The second generation of error demands as implicit submission as God's truth. The transmission of error against himself, God says, aggravates the evil, does not excuse it. (*Ibid.*) — Ver. 5. *Will send fire into Judah.* So we know that a fiery stream will come forth and destroy all who, whether or no they are in the body of the Church, are not of the heavenly Jerusalem; dead members in the body which belongs to the living Head. And it will not the less come, because it is not regarded. Rather, the very condition of all God's judgments is to be disregarded and to come, and then most to come when they are most disregarded. (*Ibid.*) — Ver. 6. *For three transgressions of Israel,* etc. We see here that the idolatry of Israel was a fountain of all sorts of misdeeds, even of such as would shock a reasonable man, as the list shows; perversion of justice, oppression of the poor, unnatural uncleanness and shameless luxury. — Ver. 7. *Pant after the dust.* Covetousness, when it has nothing to feed on, craves for the absurd or impossible. What was Naboth's vineyard to a king of Israel with his ivory palace? What was Mordecai's refusal to bow to one in honor like Haman? Covetousness is the sin, mostly not of those who have not, but of those who have. It grows with its gains, and is the less satisfied the more it has to satisfy it. (Pusey.) — *To profane my holy name.* The sins of God's people are a reproach upon himself. They bring Him, so to say, in contact with sin, and defeat the object of his creation and revelation. "He lives like a Christian," is a proverb of the Polish Jews, drawn from the debased state of morals in Socinian Poland. The religion of Christ has no such enemies as Christians. (*Ibid.*) — Ver. 8. *They stretch themselves,* etc. They condensed sin. By a sort of economy in the toil they blended many sins into one: idolatry, sensuality, cruelty, and, in all, the express breach of God's commandments. This dreadful assemblage was doubtless smoothed over to the conscience of the ten tribes, by that most hideous ingredient of all, that the "house of their God" was the place of their revelry. What hard-heartedness to the willfully-forgotten poor is compensated by a little church-going! (*Ibid.*) — Vers. 9, 10. *And I destroyed,* etc. We need often to be reminded of the mercies we have received, which are the heaviest aggravations of the sins we have committed. God gives liberally and upbraids us not with our meanness and unworthiness, and the disproportion between his gifts and our merit; but He justly upbraids us with our ingratitude and ill-requital of his favors, and tells us what He has done for us, to shame us for not rendering again according to the benefit done to us. (M. Henry.) — Ver. 11. *I raised up . . . dedicated ones.* The life of the Nazarite was a continual protest against the self-indulgence and worldliness of the people. It was a life above nature. They had no special office except to live that life. Their life taught. Nay, it taught in one way the more, because they had no special gifts of wisdom or knowledge, nothing to distinguish them from ordinary men except extraordinary grace. They were an evidence what all might be and do, if they used the grace of God. (Pusey.) — Ver. 12. *Made them drink wine.* What men despise they do not oppose. "They kill us, they do not despise us," were the true words of a priest in the French Revolution. Had the men in power not respected the Nazarites, or felt that the people respected them, they would not have attempted to corrupt or to force them to break their vow. (*Ibid*). — *I command the prophets, Prophecy not.* Those have a great deal to answer for who cannot bear faithful preaching, and those much more who suppress it. (M. Henry.) — Vers. 13–16. When God's judgments go forth, no power, wisdom, wealth, arms, swiftness or experience, is of any avail. Because men so readily fall into contempt of God's judgments as something easy to be avoided, He at times expresses them in such terms as to show that no escape is possible. (Rieger.)

CHAPTERS III.–VI.

II. *To the Kingdom of Israel, especially to its Great Men, the Divine Judgment is announced upon the Prevailing Sins, unless Men seek the Lord.*

Chapter III.

1. *As surely as the Prophet bears the Divine Commission, will God punish Israel.*

1 Hear this word,
Which Jehovah speaks concerning you, ye sons of Israel,
Concerning the whole family
Which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying,

2 You only have I known of all the families of the earth;
Therefore will I visit upon you all your iniquities.

3 Do two walk together
Unless they have agreed?[1]

4 Does the lion roar in the forest
When he has no prey?
Does the young lion utter his cry out of his den
Unless he has taken something?

5 Does a bird fall into a trap[2] on the ground
When there is no snare for him?
Does the trap rise up from the earth
Without catching anything at all?

6 Or is a trumpet blown in a city,
And the people are not alarmed?
Or does misfortune occur in a city,
And Jehovah has not caused it?

7 [No;] for[3] the Lord Jehovah does nothing
Without having revealed his secret to his servants, the prophets.

8 The lion roars,
Who does not fear?
The Lord Jehovah speaks,
Who must not prophesy?

9 Make it heard over the palaces in Ashdod,
And over the palaces in the land of Egypt,
And say, assemble upon the mountains of Samaria,
And see the great confusions in the midst thereof,[4]
And the oppressed in the heart thereof.

10 And they know not to do right, saith Jehovah,
They who store up violence and devastation in their palaces.

11 Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah,
An enemy, and that round about the land![5]
And he shall bring down thy strength[6] from thee,
And thy palaces shall be plundered.

12 Thus saith Jehovah,
As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion
Two legs or an ear-lappet,
So shall the sons of Israel deliver themselves;
They who sit in Samaria
On the corner of the couch and on the damask of the bed.[7]

13 Hear ye and testify to the house of Jacob,
Saith the Lord Jehovah, the God of Hosts:

14 That in the day when I visit Israel's transgressions upon him,
I will visit the altars of Bethel,
And the horns of the altar[8] shall be cut off and fall to the ground.

15 And I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house,
And the houses of ivory shall perish,[9]
And many[10] houses shall disappear.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 3.— נוֹעָדוּ. To *meet together* at an appointed time and place.

2 Ver. 5.— פַּח is the fowler's net, מוֹקֵשׁ, the springe or snare which holds the bird fast. לָהּ belongs to צִפּוֹר [In order to catch a bird in the net, a springe must be laid for it.]

3 Ver. 7.— כִּי. Not "surely," as in E. T., a signification which it never has, but, "for," in connection with a negative implied in its relation to what precedes. Cf. Micah vi. 4, Job xxxi. 18.]

4 Ver. 9.— מְהוּמוֹת, *noise*, *disorder*, denotes a state of confusion, resulting from a complete overturning of right, such as is expressed by עֲשׁוּקִים, probably to be taken as an abstract, "the oppression" (of the poor) or possibly concrete, "the oppressed."

5 Ver. 11.— עֻזֵּךְ, *thy strength*, *i. e.*, Samaria's.

6 Ver. 11.— וּסְבִיב is explanatory, "and that round about the land," *i. e.*, will come and attack it on all sides.

7 Ver. 12.— פְּאַת מִטָּה, the corner of the divan, the most convenient for repose. דְּמֶשֶׁק, *damask*, covered with a costly stuff. [Pusey and Wordsworth revert to the old view (Sept., Vulgate, Syriac, Targum), which is followed in the Authorised Version, and interpret, "and recline on Damascus as a couch," but their reasons do not seem to have much weight.]

8 Ver. 14.— הַמִּזְבֵּחַ is the singular of species, and is equivalent to a plural.

9 Ver. 15.— Ivory houses are such as have their apartments adorned with inlaid ivory (cf. 1 Kings xxii. 39).

10 Ver. 15.— רַבִּים, not "large" as E. T., but "many."

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. Vers. 1–2. **Hear this word which Jehovah,** etc. "Hear this word." This phrase is repeated at the beginning of chaps. v. and vi. It therefore shows this chapter to contain *one* address complete in itself. See the Introduction. **Upon the whole family.** Although afterwards destruction is threatened only against the ten tribes, yet here the entire race is included. The people as a whole were known and chosen of God, and therefore the punishment of sin is set forth in universal terms. Just so far as sin extends, punishment will and must come. Certainly this occurred first in the case of the ten tribes, but how little Judah could count upon being spared, has already been seen in ch. ii. 4, etc.

Ver. 2. **Only you have I known.** This is equivalent to "I have chosen," since the knowing expresses a relation of sympathy and love, as "the motive and the result of the election."

2. Vers. 3–8. **Do two walk together, etc.** The general announcement of a punitive judgment is followed — without any apparent connection with the foregoing — by a series of propositions illustrated by examples from daily life. Plainly, these perhaps proverbial phrases are here introduced only by way of comparison. They illustrate the principle that every effect has its cause.

Ver. 4. **When he has no prey,** refers, as Keil justly states, not to the actual seizing of the prey by the lion, but to his having it before him so that it cannot escape. In like manner, the phrase in the second clause, "unless he has taken something," is to be explained. The lion makes his capture not merely when he has seized and is rending the prey, but when it is so near that escape is impossible. [The lion, as a rule, roars most terribly when it has the prey in sight, upon which it immediately springs. Bochart.]

Ver. 5. **Does the trap rise up?** because lifted up by the bird flying away. **Without catching,** *i. e.* the bird.

Ver. 6. In the first member the usual order of these propositions is reversed, and the cause is mentioned first, — the blowing of the trumpet, — and the result follows. In the second, the other order is restored. In this last, similes are abandoned, and the discourse states directly what had been implied in numerous comparisons. As little as two can walk together without, etc., etc.; so little can misfortune occur in a city without the Lord's hand; or rather, as in all these cases, one thing is the result of the other as its cause, so is it here. "Misfortune" in the city is the result, the

"Lord" is the cause. Even this is to be considered as a kind of proverbial speech, but it explains the subject treated of in this passage. The prophet has threatened the whole people in ver. 2, with a visitation from God. Against this the consciousness of Israel revolts, especially because the visitation is to come from God, their own God, Jehovah. Therefore the prophet proves the correctness of his declaration by these examples, in which he traces with the certainty of the strictest logic every effect to a cause, and so every misfortune in the city to Jehovah as its author (and to his punitive righteousness as the cause). If this be so, every objection is obviated. Whatever misfortune exists must be traced back to Jehovah. This however is not proved, but only illustrated, by the examples cited, which show simply that as every event has its cause, so also must misfortune; so that the question remains, Is this result to be attributed to Jehovah's activity? The answer to this is found in vers. 7, 8, which must be taken together, since it is only thus that they furnish the desired proof.

Ver. 7. **For** presupposes the answer No, to the foregoing questions, especially the last. No, misfortune does not occur without Jehovah's hand, for, etc. The proof in the first instance is this: Jehovah does nothing without having disclosed his "secret," *i. e.* his secret counsel, to his servants, the prophets. The latter is certainly not the cause, but it is the indispensable condition of Jehovah's activity, so that between the two there is a necessary connection. But this very revelation to the prophets has as an inevitable result (ver. 8), their prophesying, which again is illustrated by an example drawn from experience, **the lion roars**, etc. so that this prophesying is not an accidental or capricious thing, but proceeds from a *causa sufficiens*, which lies in Jehovah himself. Therefore the meaning is: when the prophet speaks or predicts, Jehovah has revealed it to him, and the former is the result of the latter. But if Jehovah has made a revelation to him, then what he predicts, namely, misfortune, is really impending from Jehovah. The Lord will let it come. He will not indeed in the absence of such a revelation; but wherever this occurs, it is a token that He will bring it to pass. Therefore a prophecy, a foretelling of calamity by a prophet, is a voucher — כִּי — that the calamity is from the Lord, that a causal connection exists between the two as certain as that between the things mentioned in vers. 3–6. Otherwise, the prophet could not announce such a calamity, since he announces only what Jehovah reveals to him, but must announce that. The divine origin of his prophecy is to the prophet, therefore, the basis on which he proceeds as on a certain reality, and from this he argues and proves the divine authorship of the fact which he predicts, namely, a punitive judgment. Thus is sustained the truth of the saying, that Jehovah would visit Israel. — Only in this way do we understand the כִּי in verse 7. It is therefore a reversal of the order of thought when most interpreters say that from ver. 3 the prophet is proving the divine origin of his prophecy against the objection that he spoke only from subjective influences, *i. e.*, "as little can a prophet speak without a divine impulse as any other effect can be produced without a cause" (B. Baur). No, the prophet does not justify himself or his calling, he is sure of that; he only seeks to convince his hearers or readers that they are really to expect the judgment which he announces, and to this end he uses the fact that prophecy comes from God. — Concerning the examples in ver. 3 ff. Baur correctly remarks, "There is no occasion to regard them as anything more than mere analogies representing the general relation of cause and effect, or to assign to each case a special reference to the prophet's thought, *e. g.*, the *two* as a figure of God and the people, the *lion* as representing Jehovah, and the prey and the bird, the wicked, etc." Such a method leads to constrained refinements, as may be seen in Keil, *in loc.* The illustration of one principle by so many examples may seem somewhat tedious, but to understand it, one must consider the partiality of the Orientals for figurative and proverbial speeches, which leads them to express in these concrete forms even such an abstract truth as the relation of cause and effect. There is nothing strange, therefore, in finding such a representation coming from the herdman of Tekoa.

3. Vers. 9–15. Here the Lord's purpose respecting the sinful people is openly declared.

(a.) Vers. 9, 10. *The sins.* **Make it heard,** etc. Not only are the sins to be punished set forth, but the heathen are summoned as witnesses. This turn in the address indicates that the sinfulness is very great, enough even to surprise the heathen, and thus puts Israel to shame.

Ver. 9. *Publish ye.* Jehovah is the speaker, and we must regard the command as addressed to the people in these heathen lands. **The palaces,** *i. e.*, those who dwell there, are to be informed, because the question concerns what is done in the palaces of Samaria. **Ashdod,** as part for the whole, is put for the Philistines, who were regarded by Israel as godless heathen. **Egypt,** "whose unrighteousness and ungodliness Israel had once abundantly experienced" (Keil). — **On the mountains of Samaria,** *i. e.* around Samaria, whence they could look into the city.

Ver. 10. **They know not to do right.** They do not understand it, so accustomed are they to unrighteousness. **They who store up violence,** etc.; evil treasures which, so far from helping, destroy them.

(b.) Vers. 11–15. **Therefore thus saith,** etc., צַר may be abstract or concrete. The latter is more probable, especially as in that case it is naturally connected with the verb וְהוֹרִיד, which otherwise would require Jehovah to be understood as its subject. The clause is an emphatic assertion in the form of an exclamation.

Ver. 12. In this plundering of Samaria, the great men will be able to save their lives only to the smallest extent and with the greatest difficulty. Both points are suggested in the comparison. ("A pair of shin-bones and a piece, *i. e.* a lappet, of the ear." Keil.)

Ver. 13. Renews the threatening and raises it still higher. There will be an utter destruction **Hear ye,** etc., is addressed to the Israelites, as in ver. 1, since among even these God has those who will testify what He is going to do. They shall, when summoned as witnesses of wrong doing, announce also the punishment of Israel. **House of Jacob** means all Israel, *i. e.*, the twelve tribes; even Judah should hear it so as to learn a lesson. The Divine names are accumulated for emphasis; the threat of such a God ought to make a deep impression. The visitation of Israel will begin with the destruction of the altars in Bethel, *i. e.*, of idolatry, the religious source of the moral corruption. This is more closely defined by the cutting off of the horns, which destroys the significance of the altar.

Ver. 15. **Winter houses and summer houses** are primarily those of the royal family, but perhaps also those of the noblemen. — The threatened judgment, therefore, is the overthrow of Samaria, especially its palaces, with the complete extermination of the inhabitants (ver. 12).

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. "Israel stands to us as a constant example both of the unsearchable riches of grace which God bestows and of the inconceivable judgments He sends upon those who receive his grace in vain." (Rieger.) Here again the bringing out of Egypt appears as the fundamental act of God's grace. It is mentioned alone, because by it as the condition of its outer and inner existence was Israel constituted the people of God. This bringing out, however, includes the guidance through the wilderness and the giving of the law. This people alone did God "know;" to them alone He stood in a relation of nearness and confidence; all others were aliens. Therefore so much the greater their guilt, and the more certain their punishment.

2. The sin of Israel, especially of the ten tribes, is apostasy, at least in the calf-worship (comp. ver. 14, chaps. iv. 4, v. 5). But that which particularly provokes rebuke and menace is, as appears by chap. ii. and the following chapters, the extreme moral corruption, which naturally is regarded as the violation of the divine commands, covetousness and luxury, and in connection therewith, the shameless disregard of the elementary duties due to our neighbors, violent oppression of the poor. This last is continually the subject of sharp censure (cf. ii. 6, 7, and subsequently iv. 1, v. 6, 11, 12, vi. 12, viii. 5, 6). The poor always stand under the especial protection of the divine law, a peculiar feature of which is its compassion for the lowly, as the Mosaic institute shows in many of its provisions. How fully the prophet was in sympathy with this trait, is shown by the fact that upon no point is he so zealous as upon the oppression of the poor. This was doubtless because such instances frequently occurred; still it is significant that instead of merely touching them and then passing on, he brings them forward and brands them with an especial stigma. "To pervert the way of the poor," as it was before expressed in chap. i. ver. 7, is, as it were, the unpardonable sin. For this reason the prophet's rebuke is addressed mainly to the great, the higher classes; but certainly not because these alone were corrupt while the lower classes needed no particular censure, although at bottom this was the fact. Are we then to recognize a democratic feature in the circumstance, and observe how a man of the people, a herdman, feels himself called chiefly to scourge the sins of the nobles and especially those by which the humble suffered? If it is correct to assert that God called and employed him to chastise such sins, we may admit this. Only let us not ascribe to Amos that modern democratic view which reviles the higher classes because it condemns all distinctions of ranks. Rather the reverse is true of Amos. He inveighs against the sins of the great, just because their position is so important, because he knows that upon their conduct depends the weal or the woe of the community, for if corruption prevails in their circles, the foundations of the national prosperity are undermined and shaken. With equal or even greater propriety may one ascribe an aristocratic leaning to our prophet, but after a proper manner, *i. e.*, he considers the position of the higher classes very important, but for that very reason very responsible, and holds that their rights and privileges impose corresponding duties. They have much ability, but much is also expected from them, "to whom much is given," etc. And if they mistake and abuse their position, so much the heavier is their guilt and the greater the harm they work. Their degeneracy at last brings destruction upon the whole. If then a prophet were silent, or censured only the lowly and not the high, he would be justly chargeable with servility and fear of men, which would ill agree with his call to be a witness of divine truth (cf. chap. iv., Doctrinal and Ethical, 2).

3. Misfortune as a punishment comes only from Jehovah. It comes not of itself nor is casual, but has a definite cause and author, who is Jehovah He who chose and blessed his people, the same punishes them. Men may struggle against this truth, but still it remains incontestable. And when a doubt of the divine authorship intrudes, there comes a voucher in the words of the prophets. Before God executes anything, He reveals it to his servants, and these cannot but declare what is thus revealed. A calamity announced by them is a punishment proceeding from God.

4. The lofty significance of prophecy is strongly expressed in vers. 7, 8. The prophets are not only "God's servants" in general, but are also entrusted with "his secret," his "counsel," *i. e.*, what He proposes respecting his people. Yes, he does nothing until He has revealed it to the prophets. Thus He, as it were, binds himself to them. Is it asked, Why? The answer is, The aim of the revelation is to secure its announcement, as it is expressly said (ver. 8), the speaking of God to his servants necessarily leads them to prophesy. The object of their utterances is simple and single, to set plainly before men the severity of God against sin, the truth of his punitive righteousness. If this is done, so to speak, in the interest of God, naturally it is still more in the interest of men. These are to learn how the matter stands with them and what threatens them, so as to take warning while there is time. And if men do take warning — for this is the implied thought, — then "God does nothing," *i. e.*, does not carry out his secret counsel. Therefore He, as it were, puts prophecy between his "secret" and its execution, and so prophecy is justly reckoned among Israel's peculiar privileges (comp. ii. 11 and the remarks there). Well remarks Rieger in reference to the present times: "Those to whom God has intrusted the duty of bearing witness to his truth in the world now, cannot put themselves on a level with his ancient prophets, nor should they indulge any natural passion herein. Yet it is very significant that the Lord Jesus addressed to the overseers of the churches of Asia the precious testimony of his revelation, and therein the secret counsel by which God's wrath is fulfilled, and thus indicated for all time the participation of the teacher's office in the judgments of God, partly in foreseeing them, partly in foretelling them, and partly, moreover, in influencing them for good by prayer and watchfulness."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. *Hear the word which Jehovah speaks to you.* Here we learn that God's Word should be preached in such way that its hearers should

recognize that it is intended for and applies to them. For when it is declared only in general terms, especially as respects God's wrath against sin, the people commonly sit and think it does not concern them but only folks in far-off lands. It should be said, Hear what the Lord says to you who sit here under the pulpit.

Ver. 2. *You only*, etc.—*therefore I will*, etc. This is a wonderful inference. We should rather expect; therefore will I spare you. But we see that the Lord is accustomed to punish those who have received much at his hands more severely than others not so favored. For his kindness is not intended to encourage us in sin, but to render us through gratitude more devoted to Him. He has chosen us in Christ that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love (Ephes. i.), but where this result does not follow, God's goodness ceases, and his punishments fall the heavier.—(W. S.)

Vers. 3 ff. The comparisons here may be practically explained as (1) teaching us what just grounds God has for his punishments. If two walk together, they must agree, but you, He says, do not agree with me, but are my foes, by your evil works, and therefore I cannot walk with you in complacency. (2) As a lion does not roar unless the prey is just before him, so my threatenings are not uttered unless I see men just ready to fall, as it were, a prey to my wrath. Of this, however, they think lightly, and deem any calamity that befalls them an accident. But (3) just as little as a bird falls into the net without a fowler, or a fowler lifts the snare without having caught something, so little does misfortune occur without God's mind and will, who does not give up his purpose but carries it out unless withheld by a true repentance. As every one fears when the trumpet announces the enemy near at hand, so should my people when my prophets announce to them judgment for their sins. These similes remind us of the divine providence in punishments. They do not fall promiscuously, but in the righteous retribution of God, who determines beforehand who shall suffer and who escape.

[Ver. 6. *Does misfortune occur*, etc. Evil which is sin, the Lord hath not done; evil which is punishment for sin, the Lord bringeth. (Augustine.)

Ver. 7. *The Lord Jehovah does nothing*, etc. God has ever warned the world of coming judgments in order that it may not incur them. As Chrysostom says, He has revealed to us hell in order that we may escape hell. He warned Noah of the coming deluge. He told Abram and Lot of the future judgment of the cities of the plain. He revealed to Joseph the seven years of famine, and to Moses the ten plagues, and to Jonah the destruction of Nineveh; and by Christ He foretold the fall of Jerusalem; and Christ has warned all of his own future coming to judge the world. God does this that men may repent; and that if they obstinately continue in sin, He may be justified in executing punishment upon them. (Wordsworth.)

Ver. 8. *Who does not fear?* There is cause for you to fear when God roars from Zion, but if ye fear not, the prophets dare not but fear. So Paul says, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." So Peter and John, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard." Moses was not excused, though slow of speech; nor Isaiah, though of polluted lips; nor Jeremiah, because he was a child. And Ezekiel was bidden, Be not rebellious like that rebellious house. (Pusey.)

Ver. 9. *Publish in the palaces*, etc. "Since ye disbelieve, I will manifest to Ashdodites and Egyptians the transgressions of which ye are guilty." (Theodoret.) Shame towards man survives shame towards God. What men are not ashamed to do, they are ashamed to confess that they have done. Nay, to avoid a little passing shame, they rush upon everlasting shame. So God employs all inferior motives, shame, fear, hope of things present, if by any means He can win men not to offend Him. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 10. *They know not*, etc. It is a part of the miserable blindness of sin, that while the soul acquires a quick insight into evil, it becomes at last not only paralyzed to do good, but unable to perceive it. *Store up violence*. They stored up, as they deemed, the gains and fruits; but it was in truth the sins themselves, as a treasure of wrath against the day of wrath. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 11. *Therefore thus saith*, etc. There was no human redress. The oppressor was mighty, but mightier the avenger of the poor. Man would not help, therefore God would. *Thy palaces shall be spoiled*. Those palaces in which they had heaped up the spoils of the oppressed. Men's sins are in God's providence the means of their punishment. Their spoiling should invite the spoiler, their oppressions should attract the oppressor. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 12. *As the shepherd rescues*, etc. Amos as well as Joel (ii. 32) preaches the same solemn sentence, so repeated through the prophets, "a remnant only shall be saved." So it was in the captivity of the ten tribes. So it was in Judah. In the Gospel, not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble were called, but God chose the poor of this world, and the Good Shepherd rescued from the mouth of the lion those whom man despised. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 13. *Hear ye and testify*. It is of little avail to testify, unless we first hear; nor can man bear witness to what he doth not know; nor will words make an impression, *i. e.*, be stamped on men's souls, unless the soul which utters them have first hearkened unto them. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 14. *In the day when I visit*, etc. Scripture speaks of "visiting offenses upon," because in God's providence, the sin returns upon a man's own head. It is not only the cause of his punishment but a part of it. The memory of a man's sins will be a part of his eternal suffering. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 14. *The altars*, etc. The vengeance of a just and holy God will one day certainly root out false worship.

Ver. 15. *The winter-house and*, etc. What are the palaces and pleasure-houses of the wicked in the time of judgment, but a brand which kindles the wrath of the Lord.

Chapter IV.

2. Punishment must come, since despite all Chastisements the People will not amend.

1 Hear[1] this word, ye kine of Bashan,
Who are upon the mountain of Samaria,
Who oppress the poor,
Who crush the needy,
Who say to their lords,
Bring hither that we may drink.

2 The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by his holiness,
Behold days are coming upon you,
When men will drag[2] you away with hooks
And the remnant[3] of you with fish-hooks.
3 And through breaches[4] in the wall ye shall go out, every one before her,[5]
And be cast forth[6] to Harmon[7] saith Jehovah.

4 Go to Bethel and sin,—
To Gilgal,[8] and sin still more!
Bring every morning your sacrifices,
Every three days your tithes.
5 Offer[9] a praise-offering of what is leavened,
Call out for voluntary offerings, proclaim them!
For this liketh you,[10] O sons of Israel,
Saith the Lord, Jehovah.

6 And I, even I,[11] have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
And want of bread in all your places;
And ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.

7 And I, even I, have withheld the rain from you,
When there were yet three months to the harvest,
And have caused it to rain upon one city,
And cause it not to rain[12] upon another.
One field is rained upon,
And the field upon which it does not rain, withers.
8 And two, three cities stagger to one city
To drink water, and are not satisfied;
And ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.

9 I have smitten you with blight and with mildew;
And the multitude[13] of your gardens and your vineyards,
And of your fig trees and olive trees, the locust devoured;
And ye have not returned to me, saith Jehovah.

10 I have sent pestilence among you in the manner of Egypt,[14]
I have slain your young men with the sword,
Together with the booty[15] of your horses,
And caused the stench[16] of your camps to ascend even into your noses,
And ye have not returned unto me, saith Jehovah.

11 I have overthrown among you,
As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,

And ye were like a brand plucked out of the burning;
And still ye have not returned unto me.

12 Therefore thus will I do to thee, O Israel.
Because I will do this to thee,
Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

13 For, behold, He that formeth the mountains and createth the wind,
And declareth to man what is his thought,
Who maketh dawn darkness,
And goeth over the high places of the earth,
Jehovah, God of hosts, is his name.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — שְׁמַעְנָה for שְׁמַעְנָה, because the verb stands first. Cf. Is. xxxii. 11.

2 Ver. 2. — נִשְּׂא is Piel, as in 1 Kings ix. 11. Green's *Grammar*, § 164, 2. כִּי pleonastic, like the Greek ὅτι, in direct address.

[3 Ver. 2. — אַחֲרִית is not *posterity* (Fürst, Henderson), but *remnant*, "all even to the very last." Cf. Hengstenberg, *Christol.*, i. 367.]

4 Ver. 3. — פְּרָצִים is accusative of place.

5 Ver. 3. — נֶגְדָּהּ, *i. e.*, without turning to the right or the left." Cf. Josh. vi. 5–20.

6 Ver. 3. — הִשְׁלַכְתֶּנָה, ־נָה is simply the full form of the pronoun, added here to obtain a similarity of sound with the preceding verb. The Hiphil form is found in all the MSS. save one, and is defended by Hitzig, Ewald, etc., but as it is very harsh, it is better, with the LXX., Syr., Sym., Vulgate, and Arabic, to take it as Hophal (Jerome, Fürst, Keil, etc.).

7 Ver. 3. — הַהַרְמוֹנָה. This *hapax legom.* is not yet satisfactorily explained, although almost every possible interpretation has been given. The final letter appears to be ה local, and in that case the word indicates the place into which the fugitives are cast. But where that place is none can say; we have only conjectures, for which see Keil and Henderson *in loc.*

8 Ver. 4. — "Gilgal" is in the accusative after "go" understood from the preceding clause. "Every three days," is the literal rendering adopted by Ibn Ezra, Rosenmüller, Maurer, Keil, etc. Kimchi gives it as E. V., and is followed by Henderson. The LXX., Vulgate, and Luther agree with Ibn Ezra.

9 Ver. 5. — קַטֵּר, infin. absol. used for the imper.

[10 Ver. 5. — "For this liketh you." This fine archaism seems preferable to the marginal equivalent of the E. V., "So ye love."]

[11 Ver. 6. — The first personal pronoun, when separately expressed in Hebrew, is always emphatic; hence the repetition in the version, "I, even I."]

12 Ver. 7. — אַמְטִיר. The imperfects from here on are used as the historical present to give life to the description.

13 Ver. 9. — הַרְבּוֹת, infin. const. used as a substantive = multitude.

14 Ver. 10. — "In the manner of Egypt," because pestilence is epidemic in Egypt (Is. x. 24–26).

15 Ver. 10. — עִם שְׁבִי is usually explained: "together with the carrying away of your horses," so that even your horses were carried away. But Keil renders it concrete = the booty, so that even the horses that were captured, perished.

16 Ver. 10. — וּבְאַפְּכֶם — even into your nostrils, "like as a memorial of their sins" (Hitzig).

17 Ver. 13. — עֹשֵׂה, may be, who turns the dawn into darkness, or, by asyndeton, who makes dawn, darkness, *i. e.*, both. [The latter is preferred by Calvin, is expressed in the LXX., and is said by Henderson to be the reading of more than twenty of Kennicott's MSS.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. Vers. 1–3. **Hear this,** etc. Plundering and destruction had been threatened; here carrying away is added. They who are threatened are the same as in chap. iii. The comparison to kine of Bashan, *i. e.*, strong, well-fed, well agrees with the description of their extortions and their luxurious life in that chapter. They are compared to cows rather than bulls, manifestly because the latter figure would be too dignified for such persons as are intended. Perhaps their effeminacy is also hinted. But it is certainly wrong to understand the expression as meaning specifically the women of Samaria. For nothing characteristic of women is said of the cows, but only what had previously been said of the great in general. Nor is the phrase **who say to their lords,** any objection to this view; for cows have their "lords," and the term here means the king and the princes under whom the other great men are ranked. So the Targum. Jerome, Calvin, Maurer, and others.

Ver. 2. The threat is introduced by an oath. Jehovah swears by his holiness, for this perfection must desire the punishment of such an unholy life. **Your remnant,** what has not been dragged away with hooks. To understand this as meaning "posterity," would require us to consider two generations as included in the punishment threatened, which is a thought foreign to the context.

The breaches in the walls, are those made at the capture of the city. [There will be no need to resort to the gates, for egress will be possible in every direction. — C.] As to the much disputed **Harmon,** all the ancients and most of the moderns take it as a proper name, — Armenia, Rimmon, Hermon, etc. Kimchi, followed by Gesenius, Winer,

Henderson, resolves the word by a change of its first letter into the term meaning palace or citadel, and renders "will be cast down as to the palace," *i. e.*, from it. Dr. Van Dyck in the New Arabic Bible, also takes it as appellative, and renders "to the citadel."

2. Vers. 4, 5. **Go to Bethel, etc.** You will not arrest this judgment by your idolatrous worship, eagerly as you may pursue that worship. Such eagerness is only an enlargement of your sins. This thought is expressed in a manner bitterly ironical by a summons to greater zeal. **Gilgal** was, like Bethel, a seat of idol worship (cf. on Hos. iv. 15). The whole passage is hyperbolical. "Even if you offered slain offerings every morning and tithe every three days, it would only increase your guilt."

To the same effect in ver. 5 they are told, instead of being content with unleavened cakes, to offer also upon the altar even the leavened loaves which were not required by law to be consumed (Lev. vii. 13, 14). And so with the free-will offerings. Instead of leaving these to spontaneous impulses, they in their exaggerated zeal *called out* for them, published them. The words, **for this liketh you,** make a mock of this zeal. But the mock is subsequently turned into earnest. For men surely should not persist in such love and zeal for idol-worship, after God had so often punished them for it.

3. Vers. 6–11. All punishment hitherto had been in vain. This is shown in five instances, each concluding with the sorrowful refrain, **and yet ye have not returned unto me,** which strikingly display the love of Jehovah, who visits and punishes his people only to prevent the necessity of severer punishment.

(a.) Ver. 6. **And I also,** etc. To what they did, the prophet sets in opposition what Jehovah did. **Cleanness of teeth,** because they had nothing to eat.

(b.) Vers. 7, 8. **Withheld the rain when,** etc. The latter rain is meant. As this fell in February and March, while the harvest occurred in May and June, the interval was reckoned in round numbers at three months. ["This is utterly ruinous to the hopes of the farmer. A little earlier or a little later would not be so fatal, but drouth *three months before harvest* is entirely destructive." *The Land and the Book*, ii. 66.] The withholding of rain is stated as partial, in order to show more distinctly that it was a divine ordering.

(c.) Ver. 9. The third chastisement was a bad harvest, arising from a blight upon the cereal grains and the destruction of fruits by locusts.

(d.) Ver. 10. The fourth chastisement was pestilence and war. For the grievous sufferings of Israel in the latter, see 2 Kings viii. 12, xiii. 3, 7.

(e.) Ver. 11. **I overthrew,** etc. This manifestly does not indicate a new chastisement in addition to the foregoing, but sums them all up in a single utterance. "The comparison of the doom of Ephraim to that of Sodom and Gomorrah, is a general indication of the greatness of their punishment (cf. Is. i. 9). The way in which the destruction of the cities of the plain is spoken of, plainly refers to Gen. xix. 29, where occurs the word 'overthrow,' which became the standing phrase to describe this fearful fate (Deut. xxix. 22; Is. i. 7, xiii. 19; Jer. xlix. 18, l. 40)." (Baur.) **As a brand.** The emphasis does not lie on the actual escape, but on the fact that it was so narrow. The phrase vividly depicts the severity of their chastisements hitherto; so much the more inexcusable are they for not having returned to the Lord.

4. Vers. 12, 13. **Therefore thus will I,** etc. *Thus*, but *how* is not said. "Thus," is therefore to be regarded as a general threat, which is so much the more severe, because it is not stated what shall come, so that there is everything to fear. The punishment is indeed generally indicated in this chapter, as also in chapter iii. But the chief point of the chapter is to recall the past hard-heartedness of Israel, not to describe their punishment, since there are only brief references to the judgment already mentioned, the full description of which is resumed in chap. v. As yet it is only a threat: hence the summons, **Prepare,** etc., *i. e.*, not to meet your doom, but to avert it by true repentance (cf. chap. v. 4, 6). "To give the greater emphasis to this command, ver. 13 depicts God as the Almighty and Omniscient who creates prosperity and adversity." (Keil.) "His thought" does not mean man's thought, but God's own, which He makes known by the prophets, *i. e.*, his purpose to punish. [It seems more natural, as it is more in accordance with the uniform usage of the word שִׂיחַ to refer it to man. As Pusey says, "To man, a sinner, far more impressive than all majesty of creative power is the thought that God knows his inmost soul. He declareth unto man his meditation, before he puts it into words."] **Treads upon the high places** = rules over all, even the highest of earth. Finally the whole is confirmed by the lofty title of God as **God of Hosts.**

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. "This discourse (vers. 1–3) strikes at those who are in authority and practice violence at court and elsewhere. In them, unrighteousness in act concurs with great looseness in speech. The more violently men deal in matters of office and government, the more viciously do they proceed among their fellows, trying to stifle all humane feeling for others' need and all complaints at the wrong that is done. But the more frivolous their talk, the more earnest is God in his counsel and oath against them; and as they have done much for the sake of advancing and enriching their posterity, so the judgment of God strikes them with their posterity." (Rieger.)

2. "Since the prophet here attacks so severely the heads of the state, we are to consider that if a modern preacher were to do the same, it would be regarded as an insult and a calumny. But if a preacher out of a proper zeal should at times handle somewhat harshly acknowledged public offenders who can be reached in no other way, this is by no means to be deemed an unbecoming insult, for the same reproach would apply to the prophets, to our Lord Himself, and to his Apostles, all of whom often uttered severe language. When in any such case the rebuke aims only at the benefit of the persons concerned, it is not an impropriety or an outrage, but a work of love demanded by the preacher's office, which is to censure the impenitent. This must be done not only upon the lowly but upon the lofty, and indeed the more upon the latter because they do so much more harm when they act amiss." (*Wurt. Bi.*) It is a natural inference that such a thing should be done not in passion nor personal provocation, but really from a holy zeal against sin. But clear as the matter is so far, the more difficult is it in practice. One can only say, Let each man approve himself to God as to his inward feeling. The fear of man should not close the mouth to an open testimony against the high. But it does not follow that an open mouth

is always a token of zeal for God's honor. Least of all is such a thing found in a mere copying of others, even though they be prophets. Nor should the difference between prophets and the preachers of our day be obliterated. With the courage to bear testimony must be united the courage to suffer on account of such testimony (cf. at chap. iii. Doct. and Eth. 2).

3. They who shamelessly transgress the simplest moral duties, develop along with this course a powerful religious zeal and cannot do enough in worship. An apparent contradiction, yet one confirmed a hundred times by experience; moral corruption and religious bigotry amalgamated! Yet is it altogether natural; the religious form covers over the moral nakedness and quiets the conscience; but this is certainly a horrible delusion. That it was a false worship in which the Israelites were so zealous, enhances their guilt, for it was an apostasy from Jehovah. But even a religiosity which is formally correct, may be used as a cover for wickedness, and be blended with moral corruption. Thus it is well to remember that religious zeal in itself is no proof that all is well.

4. God tries all means before proceeding to extremities. If benefits are not recognized, He sends chastisements. These in the first instance aim not at destruction, but at opening the eyes through the perception of the divine wrath so that men may repent and seek God. They are therefore as much tokens of grace as proofs of wrath. But if this aim is not reached, the forbearance of God ceases, and a decisive judgment steps forth. But this last is something extorted from God, it is against his real disposition; only with reluctance does He resolve upon it. He waits long in the hope that there will be a change and so the last step be unnecessary. Most clearly does the sorrowful love of God shine out from the vivid delineation of the prophet. National calamities, according to our chapter, are to be viewed as chastisements from God. This view does not conflict with the existence of natural causes, but recognizes God as the being in whose service these act. It sees in the course of the world, not the blind mechanism of a clock, but the work of a personal intelligent will, and considers the laws of that course as the thoughts of this will, which rules and governs the whole, the domain of the physical as well as that of the moral and spiritual, and naturally does not leave these to run on merely side by side, but puts them in constant and intimate relation and alternation with each other, so that physical life finds its highest aim in the loftier domain of moral and spiritual life. National calamities are only a lower degree of the revelation of God's wrath. Heavy as they may be, they endanger only the material conditions of a nation's life, and that in a superficial way from which there may be a recovery, but they do not imperil its essential being, which consists in its political "independence and freedom." That a nation is determined to maintain and guard this, that it considers the loss of it the last punishment from God's hand, comes forth very clearly as the prophet's view. A nation therefore should defend this against the attack of a foreign foe. But it is equally clear that where the inner conditions, piety and righteousness, no longer exist, there all pains to preserve independence are vain. God gives the power and victory to the foes. What enemies do, that God himself does through them (cf. chap. ii. 13, iii. 15). Here also there is no denial of the nearer causality, that of the human will. But while man is doing only his own will, he at the same time does the will of God, acts as his instrument, and serves his aims, which are the highest, the only absolute ones.

5. With a short but lofty delineation of God's transcendent greatness and almighty power, the prophet concludes the chapter, showing that Jehovah is one who speaks with emphasis and can execute his threatenings. It is as beautiful poetically as it is profound theologically. It exhibits an elevation and depth in the conception of God, which permits a very definite conviction as to the strength and clearness of the divine manifestation made to Israel. As thus controlling all things, God is called the God of Hosts. Observe how fond Amos is of this phrase in the vehement outpouring of indignation in the chaps. iii.–vi., cf. iii. 13, iv. 13, v. 16, 27, vi. 8, 14. Here Jehovah appears as One who towers above all creaturely existences, who rules the highest spheres of might, against whom therefore nothing can avail, around whom everything stands ready to execute his will. He is not the national God of Israel alone, but the God of the world. Hence He is not merely a natural force which builds and again destroys, but a personal God who acts according to his own "thought," which He makes known to men. And as such a personal, self-conscious, self-active being, He stands in constant relations with his personal creatures.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

[Ver. 1. *Who oppress the poor.* He upbraids them not for fierceness, but for a more delicate and wanton unfeelingness, the fruit of luxury, fullness of head, a life of sense, which destroy all tenderness, dull the mind, deaden the spiritual sense. They did not directly oppress, perhaps did not know that it was done; they sought only that their own thirst for luxury and self-indulgence should be gratified, and knew not, as those at ease often know not now, that their luxuries are continually watered by the tears of the poor, tears shed almost unknown except by the Maker of both. But He counts willful ignorance no excuse. (Pusey.)

Ver. 2. *Behold, days are coming.* God's day and eternity are ever coming. They are holding on their steady course. Men put out of their minds what will come. Therefore God so often in his notices of woe brings to mind that those days are ever coming; they are not a thing which shall be only; in God's purpose they already are, and with one uniform, steady noiseless tread are coming upon the sinner. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 4. *Go to Bethel and sin,* etc. Words uttered in bitter irony and indignation, as Ezekiel says (xx. 39), "Go ye, serve every one his idols," and our Lord, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers" (Matt. xxiii. 32). It is a characteristic of idolatry and schism, to profess extraordinary zeal for God's worship and go beyond the letter and spirit of his law by arbitrary will-worship and self-idolizing fanaticism. (Wordsworth.)

Ver. 5. *Call out for voluntary offerings,* etc. The profuseness of idolaters in the service of their false gods may shame our strait-handedness in the service of the true and living God. (M. Henry.)]

Ver. 6 ff. *Have given you cleanness of teeth,* etc. Before, we had a thoughtful appeal to God's mercies; now his chastisements are enumerated. These are the two chief evidences of God's approach to a people, a community, a family, or even an individual, in love or in sorrow, and what fruits one or the other has borne (Rieger). [*And ye have not returned unto me.* By repeating this sorrowful ejaculation four times (vers. 6, 9, 10, 11), God em-

phatically declares the loving design of his chastisement of Israel. (Wordsworth.)

Vers. 7, 8. The preaching of the Gospel is as rain; God sometimes blesses one place with it more than another; some countries, some cities are like Gideon's fleece, wet with this dew while the ground around is dry; all withers where this rain is wanting. But it were well if people were but as wise for their souls as they are for their bodies, and, when they have not this rain near them, would go and seek it where it is to be had. If they seek aright, they shall not seek in vain. (M. Henry.)]

Ver. 9. Of what avail are judgments? Men now are as little influenced by them as Israel of old. They do not believe they are punishments, much less that they are sent for the causes assigned. They deem them accidental, or else invent other causes, and even ascribe droughts, floods, hail, caterpillars, etc., to witchcraft and sorcery, in the face of the Scripture which expressly attributes such plagues to God. (*Wurt. Bible.*) [Ordinarily, God makes his sun to arise upon the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust, but He does not enslave himself to his own laws. There are variations, and in his Word He reveals to us the meaning of his daily variations in the workings of nature. (Pusey.)

Ver. 10. *After the manner of Egypt.* Israel, having sinned like Egypt, was to be punished like Egypt. One of the threatenings in Deuteronomy in case of disobedience was (xxviii. 27), The Lord shall smite thee with the botch of Egypt. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 11. *I have overthrown*, etc. The earthquake is reserved to the last as the most special visitation, It is at all times the more terrible, because unseen, unannounced, instantaneous, complete. The ground under a man's feet seems no longer secure, his shelter is his destruction; men's houses become their graves. War, pestilence, and famine seldom break in at once. The earthquake at once buries it may be, thousands, each stiffened (if it were so), in that his last deed of evil; each household with its own form of misery; each in its separate vault, — dead, dying, crushed, imprisoned. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 12. *Thus will I do unto thee.* God having said this is silent as to what He will do; that so Israel hanging in suspense as having before him each sort of punishment — which are the more terrible because he imagines them one by one, — may indeed repent, that God inflict not what He threatens. (Jerome.)]

Ver. 13. *He that formeth the mountains*, etc. This noble description of God on one hand arouses the conscience to appreciate his threatenings and renounce all vain confidence, and on the other encourages the heart to come again into communion with such a God by sincere conversion. (Rieger.) [If He be such a God as He is here described to be, it is folly to contend with Him, and our duty and interest to make our peace with Him; it is good having Him our friend, and bad having Him our enemy. (M. Henry.)]

Chapter V.

3. *Lament for Israel. The only Safety is in seeking the Lord. Woe to the Fools who desire the Day of the Lord.*

1 Hear this word,
Which I raise over you as a lamentation,[1] O house of Israel.
2 Fallen is the virgin[2] Israel, she does not rise again,
She is stretched out upon her soil, no one raises her up.
3 For thus saith the Lord Jehovah,
The city which goes out by a thousand[3]
Shall retain a hundred,
And that which goes out by a hundred
Shall retain ten, for the house of Israel.

4 For thus saith Jehovah to the house of Israel,
Seek ye me, and ye shall live.[4]
5 And seek not Bethel,
And go not to Gilgal,
And pass not over to Beersheba.
For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity,[5]
And Bethel shall come to naught.
6 Seek ye Jehovah, and ye shall live,
Lest he break forth like fire upon the house of Joseph,
And it devour,[6] and there be none to quench it for Bethel.

7 They who turn justice into wormwood,
And cast righteousness down to the earth!
8 He who makes the Seven Stars[7] and Orion,
And turns the shadow of death into morning,
And darkens day into night;

Who calls to the waters of the sea,
And pours them over the face of the earth,
Jehovah is his name!
9 Who makes desolation to flash [8] upon the strong,
And desolation comes upon the fortress.

10 They hate the reprover [9] in the gate,
And him that speaketh uprightly they abhor.
11 Therefore, because ye trample [10] upon the poor,
And take from him a gift of wheat;
Houses of hewn stone ye have built
But ye shall not dwell in them,
Pleasant vineyards ye have planted,
But ye shall not drink their wine.
12 For I know that many are your transgressions,
And your sins are great,
Ye who oppress [11] the righteous,
Who take a bribe,
And they push aside the poor in the gate from their right.
13 Therefore, the prudent at this time is silent,'
For it is an evil time.

14 Seek good and not evil that ye may live,
And that so Jehovah, God of hosts, may be with you, as ye say.
15 Hate evil and love good,
And set up justice in the gate;
Perhaps Jehovah, God of hosts, will favor the remnant of Joseph.
16 Therefore thus saith Jehovah, God of hosts, the Lord,
In all streets wailing!
And in all the highways shall men say, Alas, alas,
And they call [12] the husbandman to mourning,
And lamentation to those skilled in lamenting.
17 And in all vineyards shall be lamentation,
For I will pass through the midst of thee, saith Jehovah.
18 Woe to those who desire the day of Jehovah!
What good is it to you?
The day of Jehovah! it is darkness and not light.
19 As if a man fleeth before the lion,
And the bear meets him;
Or he goes into the house
And rests his hand upon the wall,
And the snake bites him.
20 Is not the day of Jehovah darkness and not light,
And gloom without any brightness?

21 I hate, I despise your feasts,[13]
And take no delight in your assemblies.
22 For if ye offer me burnt-offerings,
Your food-offerings I will not accept,
And the thank-offering of your fatlings I will not regard.
23 Take away from me the noise of your songs,
And the playing of your harps I will not hear.
24 And let judgment roll on like water,
And righteousness like an inexhaustible stream.[14]
25 Did ye offer me sacrifices and food-offerings
In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?
(No) but ye bore the tent of your king [15]
And the pedestal of your images,

The star of your God,
Which ye made for yourselves.
27 Therefore will I carry you away captive beyond Damascus,[16]
Saith Jehovah, whose name is God of hosts.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1.— קִינָה is the word used to denote David's dirge over Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 17. It is here in apposition with דָּבָר.]

2 Ver. 2.— נְטֻשָׁה, E. V. *forsaken* is quite inadequate. Targum and Vulgate have *cast down*, but better is the literal meaning given above — *stretched out*, and therefore prostrate and helpless.

3 Ver. 3. — The numerals define more closely the manner of the going forth, *i. e.* to war.

4 Ver. 4. — The two imperatives, by a usage common in all languages, express command and result; *e. g.*, Latin, *divide et impera*.

5 Ver. 5. — There is in גִּלְגָּל גָּלֹה יִגְלֶה, a play upon words which cannot be expressed in English. A similar paronomasia is suggested in the last clause, cf. Hos. iv. 15. [Pusey offers, as illustrative parallels, "Paris périra," or "London is undone."]

6 Ver. 6. — וְאָכְלָה cannot be rendered as in E. V. "and devour," as if Jehovah were the subject.

7 Ver. 8. — כִּימָה, the crowd, is the Seven Stars or Pleiades. כְּסִיל, the *fool*, but according to the old interpreters, [whom Fürst follows] the *giant*, is Orion. Both constellations are mentioned together in Job ix. 9; xxxviii. 31. The connection between vers. 7 and 8 is, They are acting in this atrocious way, whereas Jehovah is the Almighty and can bring sudden destruction upon them.

8 Ver. 9. — מַבְלִיג, causes to break in. [Following an Arabic analogy, Keil and Wordsworth suppose an allusion to the swiftness of lightning, expressed in the version by *flash*. Pusey follows Aquila and Jerome, and renders *maketh to smile*. The E. V. followed a conjecture of Kimchi, and is clearly wrong, besides quite needlessly turning שֹׁד in both members from an abstract into a concrete noun.]

9 Ver. 10. — מוֹכִיחַ. Not merely a judge acting officially, but "any one who before a tribunal lifts up his voice against acts of injustice." Cf. Is. xxix. 21.

10 Ver. 11. — בּוֹשַׁסְכֶם, ἁπ. λεγ., a variant orthography for בּוֹסס. Fürst derives it from בּוּשׁ, *i. q.* בָּאַשׁ, to be loathsome, h. bad. *Hiph.*, to bring evil upon.

11 Ver. 12. — צֹרְרֵי. This and the following participle belong to the suffixes in the nouns preceding.

12 Ver. 16. — To proclaim mourning to the husbandman = to call him to mourning.

13 Ver. 21. — חַגִּים are the great yearly festivals. עֲצָרוֹת is of uncertain meaning, commonly explained, *festive assemblies*. Cf. Joel i. 14. [All agree that it denotes convocations in connection with religious observances, whether penitential or otherwise.] אָרִיחַ, *lit.* to smell, is an expression of satisfaction, in allusion to "the odour of delight" which ascended to God from the burning sacrifice. Cf. Lev. xxvi. 31; Gen. viii. 21; Ephes. v. 2.

14 Ver. 24. — אֵיתָן. The later critics give the primary meaning as *constant*, *abiding*, and hence when applied to streams, *inexhaustible*.

15 Ver. 26. — The words here are difficult, since סִכּוּת and כִּיּוּן are ἁπ. λεγ. Perhaps they are proper names of idols, so that the adjoining words are in apposition, and we should render — Sikkuth, your king, and Chiun, your image. So Luther, and of later critics, Fürst. The name Sikkuth (in Syriac with another pointing, כֵּיוָן, Chevan) has been explained to mean Saturn, who indeed in Arabic is called Kaiman, but it is not certain that this did not originate from the passage before us, and therefore "it has no more worth than that of an exegetical conjecture" (Keil.) The LXX., changing the word, make out of כִּיּוּן an idol, 'Ραιφάν (Acts vii. 43, Ρεμφαν), the meaning of which is equally uncertain, since the name does not occur elsewhere in the LXX., or in the writings founded upon that version. Keil therefore conjectures an exchange of letters; instead of כיון they read ריפן. Then the plural צַלְמֵיכֶם becomes difficult, for although Fürst says that צְלָמִים is, like גִּלּוּלִים, שִׁקּוּצִים, used here as a singular for an idol, that is a mere assertion Naturally then the appellative כּוֹכָב would belong to both the proper names. But that כּוֹכַב אֱלֹ is not to be coördinated with the two preceding phrases, is plain from the omission, first of the אֵת which stands before each of those clauses, and then, of the ו by which they are closely bound together.

More probable then is the appellative view of Sikkuth and Chiun. The former from סָכַךְ, to cover, hence a covering, a booth. So the LXX., σκηνη. (But they improperly take מַלְכְּכֶם as a proper name, τον μολόχ.) Therefore, "tent of your king," meaning doubtless a movable shrine in which the image of the god was kept; such as, according to Herod. ii. 63, and Diod. Sic. i. 97. were used by the Egyptians. *Chiun* is correspondingly explained as pedestal, from כּוּן, and allied to כֵּן and מְכוֹנָה, therefore, *the pedestal* or *framework of your images*, that by which they were carried about. What follows is to be considered as in explanatory apposition, viz. the star of your god = the star who was your god. Undoubtedly even this explanation has great difficulties. [But still it is easier than the others which have been proposed, and is sustained by the sanction of Ribera, Junius, Gesenius, Hengstenberg, Keil, and Wordsworth.] In any case we must understand by כּוֹכָב the image of a star, for the carrying it about is inconsistent with its being an actual star,— *which ye have made* refers either to this star-image or to "your god."

16 Ver. 27. — מֵהָלְאָה לְדַמָּשֶׂק. From a distance in respect to Damascus = far beyond Damascus.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. Vers. 1–3. Lament over the fall of Israel. **This word** is further defined as a mournful song or dirge. The song follows in ver. 2. **The virgin** expresses the fact that the daughter of Israel had hitherto been unconquered (Is. xxiii. 12). This now should have an end. Vers. 3 briefly explains the dirge. Israel will perish in war even to a very small remnant.

2. Vers. 4–17. The deeper ground of the dirge; For Israel might easily be saved if they would seek the Lord, but this they will not do.

(a.) Vers. 4–6. What God desires is that they should seek Him and forsake idolatry. **To live** means in the first instance to remain in life, but naturally includes the whole welfare of the state, its independence, etc. **Gilgal** and **Bethel**, so far from helping those who resorted to them, should themselves perish. **Beersheba**, in Southern Judæa, must have been a place of idolatrous worship, to which people from the ten tribes resorted, and in so doing **passed over** the boundaries of their kingdom.

Ver. 6. Once more is the seeking of Jehovah declared to be the means of **life**, and more strictly, the means of averting the judgment. **The house of Joseph** = Ephraim, the whole kingdom being named from the principal tribe. **Bethel**, as the chief seat of worship, was the central point of the kingdom.

(b.) Vers. 7–9. By a peculiar *asyndeton* the two parties are placed in vivid contrast with each other; the people in their ungodly course, and Jehovah in his omnipotence, naturally with the implied thought, such a God can punish — ought to be feared.

Ver. 7. **Wormwood** as a bitter plant is an image of bitter wrong, as in vi. 12; righteousness therefore is conceived as a sweet fragrant plant (cf. Deut. xxix. 19). **Casting down to the earth** = trampling under foot.

Ver. 8. **Turns the shadow of death**, etc. As these words are preceded by a reference to the stars and followed by a mention of natural phenomena, they are certainly to be understood in the same way, the aim of the entire passage being to cite the obvious manifestations God thus makes of himself, in support of the foregoing threatening. The tropical explanation — "he changes the deepest misery into prosperity," does not suit here, but only the natural, literal meaning; although "the shadow of death" does not in itself signify the regularly recurring shades of night, but as, *e. g.* in Job xxv. 17, the appalling gloom of night. Here night in general is set forth under this point of view, and is compared with the shadow of death. For its gloom is conceived of as an image of the divine judgment, of the hiding of God's face. But in any case the energy of the divine power in turning darkness into light is rendered so much the more prominent. [Keil and Pusey prefer the figurative meaning, which indeed is more in accordance with the constant usage of צַלְמָוֶת, but is certainly unnatural in this place in view of the literal references before and after.] — **Who calls to the waters**, etc., can refer only to fearful inundations by waves of the sea. [The allusion to the judgment of the Flood can hardly be overlooked. Keil.]

Ver. 9. Whether the evil mentioned here is to be viewed as caused like the foregoing by manifestations of God's power in the natural world, is doubtful, but not improbable. The reference might be to an earthquake or a storm.

(c.) Vers. 10–13. **They hate the reprover** etc. The prophet returns to the conduct of Israel, which must be punished.

Ver. 10. "In the gate," shows that the reference is to judicial proceedings. "The reprover," therefore, and "the one speaking uprightly" cannot be understood of the prophets, however natural such reference would be on other grounds.

Ver. 11. **Take a gift** = do him justice only when they are paid for it. **Houses of hewn stone** are costly dwellings, Is. ix. 10. The threat is borrowed from Deut. xxviii. 30.

Ver. 12. **Who take a bribe**, may either indicate a fresh sin, *i. e.*, taking atonement money in satisfaction for a murder, against the law in Num. xxxv. 31, or may belong to the foregoing, thus, ye who oppress (imprison) the righteous and then take a ransom, *i. e.*, will release him only for a ransom. The former is more consistent with the prevailing use of the Hebrew term. [So Pusey and Keil; but certainly the word in one instance at least, 1 Sam. xii. 3, is used to denote any sort of bribe.]

Ver. 13. Manifestly belongs to what precedes, since it further describes the period of corruption. He who has prudence = whose counsel is wholesome, will be compelled to silence (cf. ver. 10, the upright speaker is abhorred); instead of attentive hearing he has only violence to expect.

(d.) Vers. 14–17. Once more the way of deliverance is pointed out, at least for a remnant. But for the mass, nothing is to be expected but deep sorrow on all sides.

Ver. 14. **And that so . . . with you as ye say.** That is, Then will that be really the case which ye now vainly imagine, — that God is with you.

Ver. 15. **Set up justice**, etc. = maintain a righteous administration of justice. Then possibly there may be favor for a remnant. This does not refer to the existing condition of the ten tribes as reduced by Syrian conquests, for the kingdom under Jeroboam II. had recovered its former territorial limits. **The remnant** refers to that which would be left in future after the great chastisement impending. See a similar allusion in reference to Judah in Joel iii. 5, and Is. vi. 13, x. 21, 23.

Ver. 16. **Therefore**, introducing the threat, presupposes a denunciation of sins. The entire chapter is full of this, and therefore naturally, vers. 16, 17 do not refer simply to vers. 14, 15. Yet these latter do, indirectly at least, contain a reproof. The warning implies that the warned are not seeking good, etc. But only such seeking can save, and it is only too certain that these are not doing it; therefore, etc., — general mourning. The sense is, on every hand there will be dead to weep for. There will be repeated what happened in Egypt at the smiting of the first-born; as the words **I will pass through the midst of thee**, allude to Exod. xii. 12. As in the cities, so in the land, there will be such a death-wail. **And they call** is to be supplied before the last clause. **The skilled in lamenting**, are the professional wailing women who were employed at funerals.

Ver. 17. Even in the vineyards, usually the places of liveliest joy, wailing should resound. ["A vintage not of wine but of woe." — Pusey.]

3. Vers. 18–27. Woe to the confident who deceive themselves with false hopes.

(a.) Vers. 18–20. **Woe to those**, etc. It would be foolish to expect help from the day of the Lord.

Ver. 18. **Who desire the day of the Lord.** Since they fancied that the carnal Israel and the

true people of God were identical, this day must of course bring to them deliverance from all distress, and also power and glory. But it is made clear that this day to them can only bring harm, can only be a day of destruction (Joel ii. 2). Therefore, should they escape one danger (from a foe), they would only the more certainly fall into another. This in ver. 19 is set forth by a figure taken from common life, the meaning of which is clear.

Ver. 20. Once more is the threatening character of the day of the Lord affirmed and repeated.

(b.) Vers. 21–27. Even with festivals and sacrifices the people do not avert the judgment. For worship, rendered as a mere *opus operātum*, as it is by Israel, is worthless before God, and even offensive to Him. Since the question concerns the ten tribes, we may assume from the following representation that the worship they rendered was as to ritual substantially conformed to that at Jerusalem.

Ver. 22. **For.** God's displeasure at the feasts, etc., arise from his dislike of the sacrifices. The construction is interrupted, the first clause having no apodosis; but this is easily supplied from the second; and the sense is, I will accept neither your burnt offerings nor your meat offerings.

Ver. 23. The singing is contemptuously called **a noise of songs.**

Ver. 24. Such worship, instead of averting the judgment, rather provokes its full execution. It should pour over the land, like a flowing stream. It is wrong to interpret the verse [with Pusey, *et al.*] as an exhortation to the people to practice judgment and righteousness. The image of a flood of waters is much too strong for such a thought; it points rather to an act of God. [Yet, one may ask, is the expression any stronger here than in the cognate passage in Isaiah xlviii. 18, "then had thy peace been as a river and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea?" But the connection manifestly favors the author's view.]

(c.) Vers. 25–27. **Did ye offer,** etc. No wonder that such a judgment impends over Israel. From of old they had been recreant to their God. Their present offensive worship was in reality only a continuation of the idolatry practiced in the wilderness.

Ver. 25. **Did ye offer to me sacrifices and food-offerings** (=bloody and unbloody oblations)? The question implies a negative answer. The people therefore are described as having omitted the sacrifices to Jehovah for forty years, which certainly could be affirmed of the race as a whole, even if there were no express statements to that effect in the Pentateuch. Still, see *e. g.* Josh. v. 5–7, for the neglect of circumcision. While the people thus omitted the service of Jehovah, they carried on in place of it, idol-worship.

Ver. 26. **And** — namely, in place of bringing me the appointed offerings — **ye bore the tent of,** etc. (see Text. and Gram.). The idolatry censured by the prophet here is of Egyptian origin. Certainly the worship of the sun was widely diffused there, but we cannot affirm its nature more precisely. The existence of a literal god of the stars cannot be historically sustained.

Ver. 27. After Israel's apostasy had been established from the history of their forefathers, the judgment (cf. ver. 24) is briefly described as a literal carrying away. Even more plainly does it appear that the prophet in his threatenings is thinking of Assyria as the power from which the downfall of Israel is to come. **Far beyond Damascus,** is only a sort of euphemism for Assyria. The conclusion is, as in the case of the preceding chapter, **the phrase, Jehovah, whose name is the God of hosts,** a token that here another division ends.

[*The Quotation by Stephen.* In Acts vii. 42, 43, the proto-martyr is represented as quoting vers. 26, 27, in terms which vary considerably from our text. The explanation is as old as Jerome. "This is to be observed in all Holy Scripture, that Apostles and apostolic men, in citing testimonies from the Old Testament, regard not the words but the meaning, nor do they follow the words, step by step, provided they do not depart from the meaning." (Quoted by Pusey *in loc.*) Stephen quoted from the Septuagint, because its variations, whether real or seeming, made no difference as to the force of the passage in establishing the fact that Israel in the wilderness worshipped false gods. Stephen also substitutes Babylon for Damascus in the closing clause of the quotation; but the idea is the same; for the prediction turned not upon the name, but the fact, namely, that God would scatter them into distant lands. Stephen was not guilty of an error or an inadvertence, but simply brought the prophecy, without any real change of meaning, into agreement with the historical associations of the people in relation to the Babylonish exile.]

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL.

1. The prophet himself calls this chapter a wail over the house of Israel. Now as in such a wail the existing sorrow is touchingly expanded, but with it whatever can serve for its present and future amelioration, so in this lament the terribleness of sin and of the destruction to which it leads is sadly depicted, but at the same time are interwoven warnings to seek God so that in some measure the evil may be abated. (Rieger.) It is indeed remarkable; from what has gone before one would think Israel's fate decided, that all admonition and warning were vain and nothing but punishment remained; and yet this chapter, far more than those which precede, gives admonition with a promise annexed. The sharper the threatening, the more the way of escape is pointed out, for "God desires not that any should perish." Certainly it is the only way; therefore the admonition only states more emphatically the complaint; this only can save you, but you will none of it.

2. "Seek the Lord that ye may live." Equally simple and definite are the monition and the promise. Man knows what he has to do, and what to expect. Not merely is warning given, but also promise and the reverse. The gain is certain if one fulfills the condition, but the condition is indispensable. Yet how little is asked — only to seek the Lord, — and at the same time how much! And on the other hand, how little apparently is promised — to live — and yet how much! Warning and promise therefore are connected together not merely by an outward, casual juxtaposition, but by an inward coherence. The result always follows upon the performance of the conditions; for it is the Lord from whom life and death proceed. Hence no other condition for the attainment of life can be imposed than just this, Seek the Lord; and no smaller gain can be promised to the fulfillment of that condition than this, — Life. How strong a testimony for the truth of religion is contained in a single maxim of this kind, and that one recorded in the Scriptures, even in the Old Testament! The condition imposed is in the first instance religious —

"Seek the Lord, and cleave not to idols" — (ver. 5, also vers. 25, 26), but this naturally involves also one of an ethical character. This is expressly stated, in accordance with the rigidly ethical character of the Old Testament, when afterwards (ver. 14) the demand is changed into, "Seek good and not evil," with the same promise attached — "that ye may live." Only he therefore seeks the Lord in truth, who seeks good, and *vice versa*. And this seeking of good is more closely defined as hating evil and loving good. Both must concur; then only is there a real seeking of good; for God does the one as well as the other. Evil must be earnestly repelled and shunned, otherwise the seeking of good lacks truth and energy; in like manner must good be grasped at, otherwise the attempt misses its aim and soon becomes fruitless. Piety must have an ethical element, must show itself by hating evil and loving good. A mere outward religiousness, however zealous in ceremonies, is worthless in the eyes of God. Amos pronounces most decidedly against a sacrificial service destitute of a corresponding disposition of heart, where the offerings and gifts are not the expression of inward devotion and obedience to God.

3. The "good" which men are to love and to do, appears here continually as rectitude, in opposition to the prevailing unrighteousness, "the turning justice into wormwood, and casting righteousness down to the earth." This is the least that can be expected, yet in another sense it is the most important, for in vain do we look for the other, and, so to speak, rarer duties from the neglecter of justice, whereas he who sincerely observes this will soon reach something farther. Justice is the foundation of social order; when it is wanting, all in the end comes to ruin.

4. "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3), appears clearly here as it does in the other prophets. Clearly and frankly the law declares God's will, and tells man what he *ought* to do; notwithstanding, sin only increases, and apostasy becomes worse. For the law cannot along with its "Thou shalt" give to man the "I will." Rather on account of his inborn depravity, its commands and prohibitions stir up the motions of sin, and lead them to a bolder outbreak. Then surely the whole curse of the law must at last light upon the transgressor; and the prophets announce this through the judgments with which they threaten the disobedient people. Thus the insufficiency of a legal position is ever more plainly set forth. The law cannot give a new heart — and this is really the question if sin is to be checked and perfect obedience secured, — but grace alone can, full and free grace. Israel had already, from the time of the Exodus, experienced many acts of grace from God, among which very properly the giving of the law itself may be ranked. But these were only benefits which address men from the outside, real benefits indeed, in which God expressed his love, but only in order thus to render his commands more acceptable. But there was wanting the peculiar, unparalleled manifestation of love which is made in Christ. He bore and suffered the full curse of the law; He took upon Himself the entire condemnation pronounced upon the transgressor. But this resulted in the largest grace to men, since He without sin took upon Himself that curse, and thus freed us from it; and through the Holy Spirit streaming into men united by faith in Him, there is created a new heart which wills what it should, which hates evil and loves good, and in which the power of the σάρξ is broken, so that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

5. Upon the day of the Lord, see Joel ii. Doctrinal and Moral, 1. The reproof which Amos utters, stands, as we may confidently assume, in close relation to Joel, *i. e.*, refers to an abuse which had been made of Joel's announcement of the day of the Lord. It appears here again that this day is essentially one of judgment. It certainly brings to Israel as God's people deliverance from their foes, but still only in so far as they are really God's people. So far as they are unfaithful and put themselves on a level with the heathen, that day is for them one of judgment, since it brings destruction upon all that is ungodly and anti-godly. The name, Israel, therefore, gives no license. Only in this sense is the announcement made. The people saw in this desired period one that would overthrow their foes and deliver them from their present distresses, without remembering that their guilt caused these distresses, and that they deserved punishment rather than deliverance. In this view, the announcement of the last day is still gladly welcomed. Men assign the evil, the punishment, to others, especially to those by whom they suffer, but claim the good for themselves, and anticipate the end of all sorrows and the dawn of cloudless prosperity. Hence results the security which is directly opposite to the watching and praying so earnestly enjoined by our Lord. Men then may long for the day of the Lord as a day of deliverance, but let them look well to the way in which they regard it, and see that this day finds them prepared and true to the Lord, so that He may recognize them as his own. Certainly it is not to be longed for in a spirit of revenge, *i. e.*, in the view that the quicker it comes the sooner will God's judgments fall upon a godless world. The true Christian rather appreciates the wisdom and long-suffering with which God forbears to judge, and rejoices that room is left for the conversion of God's foes, even if meanwhile he is to suffer by them. He who with carnal impatience wishes for God's judgments upon others, will experience them himself, and truly in a different way from that of God's people. Empty forms and lip-service, however zealously pursued, are no defense against the divine judgments, and no earnest of the salvation which proceeds thence for the true people of God. (See also under Homiletical and Practical.)

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. *As a lamentation.* God is so gracious that He not only shows us our sins, but even mourns when He must punish us for them (Luke xix. 41). The accusation before punishment becomes a lament afterwards. Did we heed God's charges, we should not need to hear his lament. [The bewailed who know not why they are bewailed, are the more miserable because they know not their own misery. Dion.]

Vers. 2, 3. God's judgments increase in severity as they go on; if the earlier and milder are fruitless, at last comes total destruction. (Pf. *B. W.*) [*Fallen.* A dirge like that of David over Saul and Jonathan, over what was once lovely and mighty but had perished. (Pusey.) God had said, How should one chase a thousand! but the blessings of obedience are turned into the curses of disobedience. As the ancient Christian poet says, If the Lord is against us, our walls become

cobwebs; but if the Lord is with us, our cobwebs become walls. (Wordsworth.)

Ver. 4. *Seek me and live.* Four times repeated (vers. 6, 8, 14). Wonderful conciseness of the Word of God, which in two words comprises the whole of the creature's duty and his hopes, his time and his eternity. . . The object of the search is God himself. Seek me, *i. e.*, seek God for himself, not for anything out of Him, not for his gifts, not for anything to be loved with Him. This is not to seek Him purely. All is found in Him, but by seeking Him first, and then loving Him in all, and all in Him. (Pusey.)

Ver. 5. *Seek not Bethel.* Israel pretended to seek God in Bethel. Amos sets the two seekings as incompatible. The god worshipped at Bethel was not the one God. To seek God there was to lose Him. *Pass not to Beersheba.* Jeroboam I. pretended that it was too much for Israel to go to Jerusalem. And yet Israel thought it not too much to go to Beersheba, perhaps four times farther off. So much pains will men take in self-willed service, and yet not see that it takes away the excuse for neglecting the true. — Pusey. *Gilgal shall surely*, etc. Literally, "the place of *rolling away*," so called because there God rolled away the reproach of Egypt from Israel (Josh. v. 9). "Shall be clean *rolled away*." This is the law of God's dealings with man. He curses our blessings if we do not use them aright. Our holiest Gilgals — our sacraments, our Scriptures, our sermons, our Sundays, — which were designed by God to roll away from us the reproach of Egypt, will be rolled away from us if we do not use them aright; and will roll us downward unto our destruction. Wordsworth.]

Ver. 6. The same promise and the same warning, — a proof that there is no other way to life, and also that the warning cannot be given too often, alas, is so often in vain. *Ye shall live.* God's gracious promises must be held before sinners, lest in despair they go from sin to sin. For how can one feel genuine repentance, if he has no hope? [*None to quench for Bethel.* Bethel, the centre of their idol hopes, so far from aiding them then, shall not be able to help itself, nor shall there be any to help it. Pusey.] God's wrath is a consuming fire; only true repentance can extinguish it.

[Ver. 8. *Seek him that maketh*, etc. Misbelief retains the name God, but means something quite different from the one true God. Men speak of "the Deity" as a sort of first cause of all things, but lose sight of the personal God who has made known his will. "The Deity" is no object of love or fear. For a First Cause who is conceived of as no more, is an abstraction, not God. God is the cause of all causes. All things are, and have their relations to each other as cause and effect, because He so created them. A "great first cause" who is thought of only as a cause, is a mere fiction of man's imagining, an attempt to appear to account for the mysteries of being, without owning that since our being is from God, we are responsible creatures who are to yield to Him an account of the use of our being which He gave us. In like way probably Israel had so mixed up the thought of God with nature that it had lost sight of God as distinct from the creation. And so Amos, after appealing to their consciences, sets forth God to them as the creator, disposer of all things, and the just God who redresseth man's violence and injustice. (Pusey.) Ye who worship the stars are rebelling against Him who made them. (Wordsworth.)]

Ver. 10. Impatience at a well-meant and friendly rebuke is the mark of an evil and perverse spirit. Such rebuke should be esteemed a kindness, even a balsam upon the head. On the other hand, reproof is to be administered with discretion. (Pf. *B. W.*)

Vers. 11, 12. *Because ye trample*, etc. Men should shun the oppression of the poor. Whence comes the swift ruin of entire families? It is because the sighing of the poor before God testifies against them. (*Ibid.*)

[Ver. 13. *The prudent is silent.* So our Lord was silent before his judges, for since they would not hear, his speaking would only increase their condemnation. So Solomon said, "He that reproveth a scorner getteth himself shame." "When the wicked rise, then men hide themselves." (Pusey.)

Ver. 15. *Hate evil*, etc. He hateth evil who not only is not overcome by pleasure, but hates its deeds; and he loveth good who, not unwillingly nor of necessity nor from fear, doeth what is good, but because it is good. (Jerome.)] To hate evil and to love good belong together. (Rieger.) *And set up justice*, etc. Justice is a pillar of the state. To set it up when fallen is the duty of all men, but especially of those in posts of honor or profit. — *Perhaps*, etc. Temporal promises are made with an "It may be," and our prayers must be made accordingly. (M. Henry.)

[Ver. 16. *Therefore saith Jehovah*, etc. For the third time here as in the two preceding verses, Amos reminds them of Him in whose name He speaks, namely, the I Am, the self-existent God, the God of all things in heaven and earth, He who has absolute power over his creatures to dispose of them as He will. (Pusey.) *Alas, alas!* The terribleness of the prophecy lies in its truth. When war pressed without on the walls of Samaria, and within was famine and pestilence, woe, woe, woe must have echoed in every street; for in every street was death and the fear of worse. Yet imagine every sound of joy or din or hum of men, or mirth of children, hushed in the streets, and woe, woe, going up in one unmitigated, unchanging, ever-repeated monotony of grief. Such were the present fruits of sin. Yet what a mere shadow of the inward grief is its outward utterance! (*Ibid.*) *Call the skilled in lamenting.* The same feeling makes the rich now clothe their households in mourning, which made those of old hire mourners, that all might be in harmony with their grief. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 18. *Woe to those who desire*, etc. A similar spirit manifested itself in those who said in Jeremiah's days, "The Temple of the Lord are these" (vii. 4), and who prided themselves on their national religious principles, but did not obey the Lord of the temple, and were therefore condemned by the Prophet. A like temper was manifested after the Captivity. The Hebrew nation was eager for the Messiah's coming to the new-built temple, but the prophets reminded them that his coming would be a day of fear and woe for the ungodly. Mal. iii. 2. (Wordsworth.)

Ver. 19. *As if a man fleeth before the lion*, etc. The day of the Lord is a day of terror on every side. Before and behind, within and without, abroad under the roof of heaven or under the shelter of one's own, everywhere is terror and death. (Pusey.)

Ver. 20. *Is not the day*, etc. An appeal to men themselves, Is it not so? Men's consciences are truer than their intellect. Intellect carries the

question out of itself into the region of surmising and disputings. Conscience is compelled to receive it back into its own court and to give the sentence. Like the God of the heathen fable who changed himself into all sorts of forms, but when he was still held fast, gave at last the true answer, conscience shrinks back, twists, writhes, evades, turns away, but in the end will answer truly when it must. The prophet then turns round upon the conscience, and says, "Tell me, for you know." (*Ibid.*)

Vers. 21, 22. *I hate, I despise*, etc. Israel would fain be conscientious and scrupulous. What they offered was the best of its kind; whole burnt offerings, fatted beasts, full-toned chorus, instrumental music. What was wanting to secure the favor of God? Love and obedience. And so those things by which they hoped to propitiate God became the object of his displeasure. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 23. *Take away the noise*, etc. Here is a warning to all who think to please God by elaborate musical services in his house; while they do not take heed to worship Him with their hearts and to obey Him in their daily life. (Wordsw.)

Ver. 24. *Did ye offer unto me*, etc. The ten tribes, by approving and copying the false worship of their forefathers, made that sin their own. As the Church of God is at all times one and the same, so that great opposite camp, the city of the devil, has a continuous existence through all time. These idolaters were filling up the measure of their forefathers, and in the end of those who perished in the wilderness they might behold their own. As God rejected the divided service of their forefathers, so He would their's. (Pusey.) — *Unto me.* This is emphatic. If God is not served wholly and alone, He is not served at all. As Jerome says, He regardeth not the offering, but the will of the offerer. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 25. *Which ye made for yourselves.* This was the fundamental fault. Whereas God made them for Himself, they made for themselves gods out of their own mind. All idolatry is self-will, first choosing a god and then enslaved to it. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 27. To break the force of the prophecy contained in this verse, De Wette says, "Although the kingdom of Israel had through Jeroboam recovered its old borders, yet careless insolence, luxury, unrighteousness *must* bring the destruction which the prophet foretells. He does but dimly forebode the superior power of Assyria." To which Pusey justly answers, that decay does not involve the transportation of a people, but rather the contrary. A mere luxurious people rots on its own soil and would be left to rot there. It was the little remnant of energy and warlike spirit in Israel that brought its ruin from man. In the faults referred to, they were no worse than their neighbors, nor so bad; not so bad as the Assyrians themselves, except that, God having revealed Himself to them, they had more light. God has annexed no such visible laws of punishment to a nation's sins that man could of his own wisdom or observation of God's ways foresee it. They through whom He willed to inflict it in this case, and whom Amos pointed out, were not provoked by the sins De Wette specifies. There was no connection between Israel's present sins and Assyria's future vengeance. No eastern despot cares for the oppressions of his subjects so that his own tribute is collected. As far too as we know, neither Assyria nor any other power had hitherto punished rebellious nations by transporting them. Only He who controls the rebellious wills of men, and through their self-will works out his own all-wise will and man's punishment, could know the future of Israel and Assyria, and how through the pride of Assyria, He would bring down the pride of Samaria.]

Chapter VI.

4. *Woe to the Secure who think that the Day of the Lord is far off.*

1 Woe to the secure [1] in Zion,
And to the careless in the mountain of Samaria!
To the princes of the first of nations,
To whom the house of Israel comes!
2 Pass over [2] to Calneh and see,
And go thence to Hamath the great,
And go down to Gath of the Philistines;
Are they better than these kingdoms,
Or is their territory greater than your territory?
3 Ye who put far off the evil day,
And bring near the seat of violence;
4 Who lie upon beds of ivory
And stretch themselves upon their couches,
Who eat lambs out of the flock,
And calves from the fattening stall:
5 Who trill [3] to the sound of the harp,
Like David, they invent string instruments,[4]
6 Who drink wine out of sacrificial bowls,[5]

And anoint themselves with the best oils,
And do not grieve for the hurt of Joseph.

7 Therefore now shall they go captive at the head of the captives,
And the shout[6] of the revellers shall depart.
8 The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by himself,
Saith Jehovah, God of hosts,
I abhor the pride of Jacob[7]
And hate his palaces,
And will give up the city and the fullness thereof.
9 And if ten men are left in one house they shall die.
10 And his cousin[8] and his burier shall lift him up,
To carry his bones out of the house,
And shall say to the one in the inmost recess of the house,
"Is there still any one with thee?" and he says, "Not one,"
Then shall he say, "Be still,
For we must not call upon Jehovah's name."
11 For behold, Jehovah commands, and men smite the great house[9] into ruins
And the small house into pieces.

12 Do horses indeed run upon the rock,[10]
Or do men plough there with cattle,
That ye have turned justice into poison,
And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood?
13 Ye who rejoice in a thing of nought,[11]
Who say, "With our own strength we have taken to us horns."
14 For, behold, I raise up over you, O house of Israel,
Saith Jehovah, God of hosts, a nation,[12]
And it shall oppress you from the entrance Hamath to the brook of the desert.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — בֹּטְחִים comes from the intransitive form, and is equivalent here to its use in Is. xxxii. 9, 10, 11. Mount of Sam. is not the object of trust (as in E. V.) but the place where the careless security is cherished. נְקֻבֵי, a Mosaic word (Num. i. 17), = specified by name, chosen, distinguished.

2 Ver. 2. — עִבְרוּ, *pass over*, because the Euphrates must be crossed in going to Calneh.

3 Ver. 5. — הַפֹּרְטִים, ἁπ. λεγ. perhaps = פָּרַד, to divide. According to Fürst it is here = to *break out*, especially in song. Keil interprets it to strew around, *i. e.*, words, and thinks it describes the singing as frivolous nonsense. Meier renders it "to jingle." [Pusey understands it as meaning "a hurried flow of unmeaning words in which the rhythm is everything, the sense nothing." The rendering in the text, *trill*, is from Wordsworth.]

4 Ver. 5. — כְּלֵי שִׁיר, lit., instruments of music, seems, from a comparison of 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12 with 2 Chron. xxix. 26, 27, and 1 Chron. xxiii. 5, to denote stringed instruments. [So Keil and Pusey.] חָשַׁב, to invent, devise.

5 Ver. 6. — מִזְרְקִים, *lit.* sprinkling vessels, always elsewhere denotes bowls used in the temple service. Ex. xxxviii. 3; Num. iv. 14; 2 Chron. iv. 8.

6 Ver. 7. — מִרְזַח constr. of מַרְזֵחַ, a loud cry, here of joy. סְרוּחִים as in ver. 4, *the stretched out*, i. e., at a banquet = the revellers. Fürst assumes a second root of the same radicals, to which he gives the meaning, to be bad, to stink, and metaph., to be corrupt, and renders here, the degenerate. [This seems quite needless.]

7 Ver. 8. — גְּאוֹן, the pride of Jacob, *i. e.*, everything of which he is proud. הִסְגִּיר to give up, *i. e.*, to the enemy. "The city," means Samaria, and "its fullness," whatever it contains.

8 Ver. 10. — דּוֹדוֹ, *lit.*, uncle, here denotes any kinsman. מְסָרְפוֹ, lit., his burner. As the Israelites were wont to bury and not burn their dead, it is supposed that the multitude of corpses compelled the latter course. עֲצָמִים, bones, here = body, as Exod. xiii. 19; Josh. xxiv. 32; 2 Kings xiii. 21.

9 Ver. 11. — הַבַּיִת, the singular is used indefinitely = every house, great and small. . Cf. iii. 15.

10 Ver. 12. — Meier points בַּבְּקָרִים, thus, בַּבָּקָר יָם. Does man plough the sea with oxen? [But this is a mere conjecture].

11 Ver. 13. — לֹא־דָבָר a not-thing, somewhich which does not exist, namely, the strength mentioned in the next clause.

[12 Ver. 14. — Few instances are found in Hebrew in which the object of a verb is so far removed from it, as גּוֹי is from מֵקִים. Henderson. הָעֲרָבָה is the well known Arabah, the deep and remarkable depression, now called the Ghor, which extends from the lake of Gennesareth to the Dead Sea.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. Vers. 1–6. A sharp censure of the thoughtless revelry of the heads of the nation. The **woe** points back to the similar exclamation in ch. v. 18. There a woe was pronounced upon those who mistakenly desired the day of the Lord, as if it would bring to them prosperity. Here the question is of the confident who bestowed no thought at all upon that day. Ver. 1, **in Zion**: shows that the rebuke includes Judah also, although the subsequent description refers especially to the great men "in the hill of Samaria." And as these are the distinguished in the nation, so the nation itself is called the first or most exalted of all nations, naturally enough, since it was the chosen, peculiar people of God. These princes are further described as those to whom the house of Israel comes, *i. e.*, for counsel and direction. Justly remarks Hengstenberg (*Auth. Pent.*, i. 148), that thus "the chief men were reminded that they were the successors of those 'princes of the tribes' who were formerly thought worthy to be joined with Moses and Aaron in managing the affairs of the chosen people."

Ver. 2. How high they stood, is now shown by the fact that Israel, at whose head they were placed, was not inferior in prosperity or greatness to the mightiest heathen states. [He bids them look east, north, and west, and survey three neighboring kingdoms. **Calneh**. (Calno in Isaiah, Calneh in Ezekiel), was built by Nimrod in the land of Shinar (Gen. x. 10) but is not mentioned again in Scripture until this place. Afterwards it became celebrated under the name of Ctesiphon. Julian's generals held it impregnable, being built on a peninsula surrounded on three sides by the Tigris. **Hamath the great** was the capital of the Syrian kingdom of that name on the Orontes. **Gath** was one of the five chief cities in Philistia, and in David's time the capital of the whole country.] **Than these kingdoms**, namely, Judah and Israel. Others say that the prophet speaks of destroyed cities, and that the Israelites are reminded of their fate as intimating that the same was in store for themselves (so Luther). This view would commend itself to favor, were it not opposed to the fair construction of the words. It might be allowed, if the double question, are they better, etc., admitted of an affirmative answer, namely, yes they are better. But this plainly cannot be. Bauer indeed sees this, and accordingly explains thus: "Observe these heathen states. Their lot is not better, their power not greater than yours; rather they have fallen while you by God's grace still stand; if you apostatize from Jehovah, the same fate will befall you." But how could any one speak of a power which was overthrown as "not greater" than one still standing? A comparison in respect to greatness can be made only with a still existing power. [Pusey adopts Bauer's view, but Wordsworth and Keil agree with Schmoller in making the verse simply an expansion of the statement in ver. 1, that Israel is first of the nations, unexcelled by any of their heathen neighbors.]

Ver. 3 begins the further explanation of the careless security charged in ver. 1. Regarding the **evil day**, *i. e.*, day of judgment as far off, they cause violence to erect its throne nearer and nearer among them. [Pusey follows Jerome, Grotius, Newcome, and others in referring the throne of violence to the rule of Assyria, which the people brought nearer to them while they were thinking to put it far off. But the former reference is much more natural.]

Ver. 4. To oppression they added luxurious sensuality (cf. ch. ii. 8; iii. 12).

Ver. 5. Like David they employed themselves in inventing musical instruments, but with a very different aim.

Ver. 6. They used the best oils, at a time when there was abundant cause for mourning in the breach, *i. e.*, the overthrow of Joseph. [The custom of anointing was usually suspended in time of mourning, 2 Sam. xiv. 2. But these so far from grieving employed the most costly unguents.]

2. Vers. 7–10. These verses announce the punishment. The phrase **at the head of the captives**, contains a bitter irony. The princes should maintain their preëminence even in the procession of captives.

Ver. 8. [The oath here is like that in ch. iv. 2, except that it is **by himself** instead of by *his holiness*, but the sense is the same, for the *nephesh* of Jehovah, *i. e.*, his inmost self or being, is his holiness. Keil.]

Vers. 9, 10. **Ten**, that is, many; but even of the many not one shall escape. This is made plainer by what follows.

Ver. 10. When on the death of the ninth, a relative comes to the house to bury the dead, he will ask the last one, the tenth, who has retired into a remote corner to save his life, whether there is any one still with him, *i. e.*, alive. On receiving the reply, **None**, he calls out to him, **Silence!** (literally 'St), *i. e.*, he interrupts him quickly lest he may utter Jehovah's name, and by attracting Jehovah's attention, bring down a judgment upon himself. The words, **there must be no mention of the Lord's name**, are spoken, not by Amos but by the kinsman, and they do not express despair but fear. The deaths mentioned occur partly by the sword and partly by famine, both in consequence of the conquest and overthrow of the city.

[Ver. 11. The **For** assigns the reason of the fearful destruction. It is the Lord's command, and his arm reaches rich and poor alike, "*regum turres ac pauperum tabernas*."]

3. Vers. 12–14. Upon rocks can neither horses run nor man plough. What is the force of this comparison? Either the attempt to do one or the other of these things is represented as something preposterous, and the meaning is, Even so preposterous is your turning justice into poison, etc.; or it is represented as something impossible, and the sense is, Is then the impossible possible, that you turn justice, etc., and do you think you can escape unpunished, and even attain prosperity? **That ye turn**, etc., cf. ch. v. 7. **Fruit of righteousness** is said, because unrighteousness is compared with a bitter fruit.

Ver. 13. **With our strength, taken**, as if the whole originated with themselves. **Horns**, the usual symbol of strength, here = means of overcoming foes.

Ver. 14 contains Jehovah's answer to this presumption. You are rejoicing in a thing of nought, for I will, etc. At the same time this verse resumes and confirms the threat in ver. 11, which begins with the same words, "For behold!" Assyria is plainly intended by **a people**, but as it was still in the distance, Amos nowhere mentions it by name. Perhaps, too, the omission was designed, in order to awaken the more attention. **The entrance of Hamath**, was the standing term for the northern boundary of Israel, Num.

xxxiv. 8; 2 Kings xiv. 25. [For its exact place, see Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, Amer. ed. p. 987]. **The brook of the desert**, the southern boundary, is the present Wady el-Ahsi, which separated Moab from Edom at the lower extremity of the Dead Sea. [Israel's strength had of late been increasing steadily. Jehoash had thrice defeated the Syrians and recovered several cities. What he began, Jeroboam continued during a reign of forty-one years, until he had completely restored all the ancient boundaries of the kingdom. Amos here declares that the whole region of their triumphs should be one scene of affliction and woe. This was fulfilled after some forty-five years at the invasion of Tiglath Pileser. Pusey.]

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL.

1. "Israel the first among the nations." Again and again is the lofty position of Israel emphasized, *i. e.*, its peculiar enjoyment of the divine favor, which was shown even in its outward relations, its power and influence as compared with surrounding nations. In these respects it could measure itself with any of them. This was not the highest motive of action, yet it should have sufficed to confirm them in fidelity to God. For the penalty of unfaithfulness was the loss of their position hitherto, a fall below other nations and a shameful end.

2. But alas, prosperity only led to self-will, and rendered them arrogant and secure. There is a striking picture in vers. 4–6 of an insolent, presumptuous community in which every thought of danger is drowned. The internal evils of the national life are not seen, nor is it observed how all tends steadily downward to destruction. Alas, the higher ranks here precede with their example. Instead of becoming pillars of the state by their position and culture, they help to undermine it. No wonder then that when the crash comes, they are most deeply affected and meet a frightful end.

3. The judgment which the prophet everywhere speaks of is conquest and overthrow by a foreign enemy. From this we may learn the right conception of war. It is natural to consider it a heavy calamity, since it involves the loss of fortune and life to thousands, and sometimes the downfall of entire states. But while it is true that on this account we must desire its general cessation, yet the declamations against it of the so-called friends of peace are vain, proceeding, if not always yet generally, from a mind which comprehends little or nothing of the divine government of the world. In spite of all these well-meant performances, war neither will nor can cease in this world, *i. e.*, so long as sin still exists. For it is necessary as a means of inflicting the divine chastisement upon sin. Through it God executes the judgments which, being required by his righteousness, are therefore indispensable and irresistible, — not so much upon individuals as upon nations and states which are considered as collective persons. Such acts are either processes of purification, or when the measure of iniquity is full and the time has come, works of destruction. On this ground even a war which subjectively is altogether wrong, as a war of conquest, may still be objectively justified, in so far as it is a means of executing God's righteous wrath upon a people. On the other hand we can conceive how a war undertaken only in self-defense, and therefore righteous in itself, may yet fail of the issue one would expect. It comes as a judgment upon a people ripe for such a process, and therefore no defense avails. In other cases it does avail, and a deserved punishment overtakes the foe eager for conquest. But even then the war, by the distress it causes and the sacrifices it requires, proves a serious time of sifting for the victor. Hence it is right and proper to maintain beforehand an earnest conflict against sin, lest such a heavy scourge as war should become necessary. But when such a point is reached, it becomes Christians not to utter empty declamations against war nor womanish complaints over it, but humbly to bow beneath God's hand and patiently bear their sorrows, so that thus may spring up the fruit of a new spirit well pleasing to God. For even the destruction of a nation is so far stayed that at least "a remnant" is left to undertake a new life. And the more the kingdom of God prevails among men to the overthrow of sin, the less needful will be the frightful scourge of war; but the complete reign of peace will come only when the first earth and the first heavens are passed away and all things become new. The horrors of war may and should aid in keeping alive and intense our longing for that blissful period.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. *Woe to the secure.* Security and vain confidence, the common faults of man! He is blind to his danger. He reels around the abyss without perceiving it, and at last would plunge headlong, were it not that God startles him with judgments. It is this that renders such strokes necessary. They are therefore to be deemed gracious acts, since they are intended to save from a total overthrow. But alas, how many refuse to heed them! *First of nations.* What an honor! But so much the worse if such a divine favor is not properly recognized, so much the greater the responsibility and the guilt. [The author applies this thought directly to his own nation, in view of God's recent dealings with the German people. But surely it is equally applicable to our own favored land. If our territorial extent, our material development, our liberal institutions, our final welding together in the furnace of the war for the Union, have made us first of nations, this fact should not generate vain confidence and a stupid sensuality, but rather awaken a lively gratitude and a generous obedience to the Ruler of nations, the God of hosts.]

Ver. 2. *Pass over to Calneh*, etc. A comparison with others less favored than ourselves is always wise when it prompts to humility and thankfulness. "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" Alas, often all the thanks God receives for giving us more than to others, is that we forget Him the more.

[Ver. 3. *Who put far off the evil day.* The thought that the Lord has a day in which to judge man, frets or frightens the irreligious, and they use different ways to get rid of it. The strong harden themselves, and distort or disbelieve the truth. The weak and voluptuous shut their eyes to it, like the bird in the fable, as if what they dread would cease to be, because they cease to see it. (Pusey). Henderson quotes a parallel from Claudian, *In Eutrop.*, ii. 50–54.

"*Sed quam cæcus inest vitiis amor! omne futurum*
Despicitur, suadentque brevem præsentia fructum,

Et ruit in vetitum damni secura libido
Dum mora supplicii lucro, serumque quod instat,
Creditur."

Ver. 5. *Who trill to the sound of the harp.* An artificial effeminate music which relaxes the soul, frittering the melody and displacing the power of divine harmony by tricks of art, is meet company for giddy, thoughtless, heartless versifying. Debased music is a mark of a nation's decay, and promotes it. *Like David they invent*, etc. The same pains which David employed on music to the honor of God, they employed on their light, enervating, unmeaning music, and, if they were earnest enough, justified their inventions by the example of David. Much as people have justified our degraded, sensualizing, immodest dancing by the religious dancing of Holy Scripture. (Pusey.) See Bishop Sanderson, *Lectures on Conscience*, iii. § 13.

Ver. 6. *Drink wine out of sacrificial bowls.* The first princes of the tribes (Num. vii. 13 *ff.*) showed their zeal for God by offering massive silver bowls for the service of the tabernacle; the like zeal had these princes for their own god, their belly, using the huge sacred vessels for their compotations. Like swine in the trough, they immersed themselves in their drink, "swimming in mutual swill."[1] (*Ibid.*) *Anoint themselves*, etc. In this crisis, when the divine wrath was about to break out upon the nation, and they ought to have been sitting in sackcloth and ashes, they were curious to procure the best ointment for their own use. Roman patricians, in Cicero's days, cared only for their own fish-ponds that their tables might be well supplied with mullets and other fish, while their country was in danger of being overwhelmed with a flood; they "thought only of the cock-boat of their own fortunes when the vessel of the state was going to wreck." . . . . Here is another prophetic warning for our selfish luxury. (Wordsworth.)

Grieve not for the hurt of Joseph. Joseph, the ancestor of Ephraim, the head of the ten tribes, was afflicted by his own brethren, who saw the anguish of his soul and were not moved by his tears; and when they had sold him to the Ishmaelites, sat down in heartless indifference "to eat bread" (Gen. xxxvii. 23). So their descendants, the Jews, feasted at the Passover after they had killed the true Joseph (John xviii. 28). How many dwell in ceiled houses and sing to the sound of the harp and feast on the richest dainties, and care nothing for the sorrows of Christ and his Church! (Wordsworth.)

Ver. 7. *Go at the head of the captives.* Preëminence in rank or wealth is often followed by preeminence in sorrow and shame. As the Wisd. of Sol. says (vi. 6): "For mercy will soon pardon the meekest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented."

Ver. 8. *The Lord hath sworn*, etc. Our oaths mean, "As God is true and avenges untruth, what I say is true." So God says, "As I am God, this is true." God then must cease to be God if He did not hate oppression. (Pusey.)

Ver. 9. Ten righteous men in Sodom would have saved that city. Here ten were left in one house after the siege was begun, but they did not turn to God; and therefore all were taken or destroyed. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 10. *We must not call upon Jehovah's name.* Things have come to a fearful pass when a man trembles at God's name because he fears and must fear his wrath, and hence instead of turning to Him would rather flee away. This is a frightful exhibition of the power of an evil conscience. There must be a broken heart before a man can turn in prayer for forgiveness to the God whom his sins have offended. [He who has obstinately abused the intellectual powers given him by God, to cavil at God's truth, will be forsaken by Him at last, and will not be able to utter his name. (Wordsworth.)]

Ver. 11. *Jehovah commands, and men smite*, etc. When a people is ripe for judgment, a human conqueror acts only as a divine instrument. God's judgment strikes equally the high and the low.

[Vers. 12. *Do horses run upon rocks*, etc. It is more easy to change the course of nature, or the use of things of nature, than the course of God's providence or the laws of his just retribution. They had changed the sweet laws of justice into the gall of oppression, and the healthful fruit of righteousness into the life-destroying poison of sin. Better to have ploughed the rock with oxen for food. For now where they looked for prosperity, they found not barrenness but death. (Pusey.)

Ver. 13. *Who rejoice in*, etc. How striking, to rejoice in a non-thing! Yet this is the way with men. How much of that in which they trust is a mere nonentity! It seems to be something, and still is nothing. *With our own strength*, etc. Such is the language of arrogant self-confidence. But God alone is strength, and only through Him are we strong.

Ver. 14. *I raise up*, etc. No foe could ever invade us, if the Lord did not raise Him up. War, therefore, is not an accident, but a providential dispensation. [Pharaoh, Hadad, Rezon, the Chaldees, are all expressly said to have been raised up by the Lord (Ex. ix. 16; 1 Kings xi. 14, 23; Hab. i. 6).]

1 Thomson, *Autumn*.

CHAPTERS VII.–IX.

III. *Threatening Discourses against the Kingdom of Israel in the Shape of Visions. A Promise in the Conclusion.*

Chapter VII.

Three Visions. Two of National Calamities are averted at the Request of the Prophet. The Third, of a Plumb-Line, indicates the certain Downfall of the Kingdom. Attempt of the Priest Amaziah to banish Amos from Bethel: thereupon a sharper Threat, especially against Amaziah.

1 Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me;
And behold, He formed locusts,[1]
In the beginning of the springing up of the second crop;
And lo, it was a second crop after the king's mowing.
2 And when they had finished eating the plants [2] of the land,
Then I said, O Lord Jehovah, forgive, I pray,
How can Jacob stand,
For it is small.
3 Jehovah repented of this;[3]
It shall not take place, saith Jehovah.

4 Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me,
And behold, the Lord Jehovah called to punish with fire,
And it devoured the great flood,[4]
And devoured the inheritance.
5 Then said I, O Lord Jehovah, leave off, I pray.
How can Jacob stand,
For it is small.
6 Jehovah repented of this;
This also shall not take place, saith the Lord Jehovah.

7 Thus he showed me,
And behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made with a plumb-line[5]
And a plumb-line was in his hand.
8 And Jehovah said to me,
What seest thou, Amos?
And I said, a plumb-line.
And the Lord said, Behold, I put a plumb-line in the midst of my people, Israel;
I will pass by him no more.
9 And the high places of Isaac[6] shall be laid waste,
And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be desolated,
And I will arise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

10 And Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam the king of Israel, saying,
Amos has conspired [7] against thee in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is
11 not able to bear all his words. For thus has Amos said,
"By the sword shall Jeroboam die
And Israel shall go into exile out of his land."
12 And Amaziah said to Amos, "Seer, go, flee into the land of Judah; and there eat
13 thy bread and there mayest thou prophesy. But in Bethel thou shalt no longer
14 prophesy, for it is the king's sanctuary [8] and a seat of the kingdom." And Amos
answered and said to Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor am I a prophet's son, but
15 I am a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamores.[9] And Jehovah took me from fol-
lowing the flock; and Jehovah said to me, Go, prophesy to my people, Israel."
16 And now hear the word of Jehovah,
Thou sayest, Prophesy not against Israel,
And drop[10] nothing against the house of Isaac.

17 Therefore thus saith Jehovah,
Thy wife shall be dishonored in the city,
And thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword;
And thy land shall be divided by line,
And thou shalt die in an unclean land,
And Israel shall go into exile out of his land.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — כֹּה points to what follows. יוֹצֵר has Jehovah for its subject [omitted because אֲדֹנָי יֱהוִֹה immediately preceded it. Jehovah, as usual, takes the pointing of אֱלֹהִים when אֲדֹנָי precedes it. גֹּבַי, not a plural, but a singular used collectively, is usually rendered *locusts*, but its precise origin is still in dispute.]

2 Ver. 2. — עֵשֶׂב, not *grass*, as in the A. V., but all vegetable growth. מִי, literally, "as who" = *qualis*, i. e., how? יָקוּם, stand, *i. e.*, endure. [So Keil and Fürst.]

3 Ver. 3. — עַל־זֹאת = that which was threatened in the vision. קָטֹן, small = weak.

4 Ver. 4. — תְּהוֹם רַבָּה, elsewhere the ocean, *e. g.*, Gen. vii. 11; Is. li. 10. In Gen. i. 2, it denotes the immeasurable deep at the beginning of the creation. הַחֵלֶק, not "a part," but *the* portion or inheritance.

5 Ver. 7. — אֲנָךְ, plumb-line. חוֹמַת אֲנָךְ = a perpendicular wall. [Fürst follows the LXX., Sym., and Syr. in making אֲנָךְ, ἀδάμας, a pointed hook for destroying, and the wall, a pointed wall, *i. e.*, rising up as a pinnacle.]

6 Ver. 9. — בָּמוֹת, heights used for idolatrous altars and shrines. יִשְׂחָק for יִצְחָק, so also in ver. 16. Jer. xxxiii. 26; Ps. cv. 9 = Israel.

7 Ver. 10. — קָשַׁר, to form a conspiracy.

8 Ver. 13. — מִקְדָּשׁ, sanctuary.

9 Ver. 14. — בּוֹלֵס. Perhaps from a root meaning to nip or scratch (LXX., κνίζω), because it was common so to treat the mulberry or sycamore fruit to make it ripen the sooner [or a denom. from the Arabic name for the mulberry fig. (Keil); but Fürst says that in that case שִׁקְמִים would not be added to it]. The meaning is, one that gathers figs and lives upon them.

10 Ver. 16. — הַטִּיף, to drop, is used in the sense of prophesying, also in Micah ii. 6, 11, and Ezek. xxi. 2, 7. The usage is borrowed from Deut. xxxii. 2. "My teaching shall drop as the rain."

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. Vers. 1–6. *The two first visions.* The judgments they represent are at the prayer of the prophet averted.

(a.) Vers. 1–3. *First Vision.* The locusts. **Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me.** "Showed me" is used also in the following visions. These are thus defined to be "visions," inward intuitions, rather than mere poetical fictions. But the question arises and must be answered, What did the prophet see in the first two visions? Certainly threatening judgments. But did he see the judgments themselves, or were the transactions only a figurative representation? Did they point symbolically to the future chastisements? The latter is certainly the natural view of the third vision, and also of the fourth (chap. viii.). The plumb-line and the basket of fruit are mere symbols which are subsequently explained. In the fifth vision, also, a symbolical representation is made, although the form there is somewhat different from that of the third and the fourth. But it remains to determine how we are to regard the first two. For the prophet sees here a desolation produced by locusts and by fire. Are then these the actual judgments which threaten the people, or have they only a symbolical significance? I think we must decide for the former view. In their external form, these two differ greatly from the two following. In the latter, the prophet sees only an object, but what is to be done with it or what stroke it represents, has to be stated in words; but in the former he sees a judgment fully accomplished; why then should one look for anything farther? In that view, too, the analogy between the contents of these two visions and what we read in Joel is not to be mistaken. There also there is a plague of locusts, and then "fire" (chap. i. 19); the drought, also, is there described in words transcending actual experience, so that we must regard it as a poetical representation. Yet what is there treated of is what has actually happened, while here is something which is threatened, so that it need not offend if here the colors are higher, and we read of even an ocean dried up by the heat (ver. 4). If now in Joel locusts and fire are found in close connection, why not here also? What, too, should the locusts and the fire "signify?" It must be destruction by the foe; and yet of this it is here said that at the request of the prophet it shall not take place, while in the third vision it is said that it shall. The first two visions then must have a different object from the third. If the meaning is that the threatened infliction is twice revoked, then it is strange that the same judgment is presented in two different images. Keil therefore assigns a different meaning to each image, regards the first two visions as the more general and severe, and gives to them — although not very clearly — a scope comprehending all the past and all the future. They indicate an entire destruction except a remnant spared at the prophet's request, and the second vision points also to a judgment that falls upon the heathen world (= תהום). The removal of the two at Amos's request teaches that these

judgments are not intended to effect the annihilation of the people of God but their purification, and the rooting out of sinners from them; and that in consequence of God's sparing grace, a holy remnant will be left. Both the following visions refer to the judgment which awaits the kingdom of the ten tribes in the immediate future.

How gratuitous is all this! Nothing of it is found in the visions themselves. What the prophet saw in the second vision is certainly not to occur; therefore the judgment upon the heathen, if it is contained there, is not to occur. Of a remnant remaining over, not a word is said. Therefore the first vision cannot be understood differently (see below). In place of assuming an anticlimax, we must rather, since the discourse has various stages, determine the contrary. But this does not suit the symbolical view of the first two visions, for, taken figuratively, they would by no means indicate a lighter judgment than the third, but rather a complete devastation of the land. A climax is obtained only by a literal interpretation, according to which there is first a national calamity, and then a blow which overturns the state as such. The sense of the whole is that God will have patience for a time, and spare the land the plagues which it deserves. But if there be no change, and the goodness of God does not lead to repentance, forbearance will cease and the downfall come. The view that the two first visions refer to the kingdom of Judah which finds forgiveness, and only the third relates to the kingdom of Israel which is not forgiven, has much apparently in its favor, *e. g.*, the appeal to the smallness of Jacob. Still it is to be rejected. Judah is not in question here at all. The entire chapter treats of the kingdom in the midst of which the prophet is. Were Judah meant, it would be plainly stated. Manifestly, the three visions form *one* series, so that it is unnatural to suppose that the two former relate to Judah, and that the third refers to something altogether different. The appeal to the smallness of Jacob admits also of being fairly applied to the kingdom of Israel. In the conduct of that kingdom the prophet finds no ground for forbearance; on the contrary, so far as this is concerned, the plagues must come. There remains, then, nothing but an appeal to the divine mercy and compassion on the ground of the smallness of Israel. Upon this motive alone can the prophet base his prayer, since no claim of merit is possible. Israel is small, is weak, in comparison with the strong hand of Jehovah; as if he would say, What would then become of him? Necessarily, he must be annihilated.

We return to ver. 1. That **He**, *i. e.*, Jehovah, **formed locusts**, shows clearly that the infliction is due to Jehovah, without whose will they would not come, nay, would not exist at all. At the same time the prophet sees the plague in its very beginning. But this image of the locusts occurs at a period which is defined in two ways: first, as that in which the second crop springs up, and then, this second crop is that which follows the king's mowings. The meaning is, that the period is a very unfavorable one, first, because then the only further product of the year would be destroyed, and in the next place, because the early crop having already been mown by the king, the people were restricted to the second, and this was now threatened with destruction. Since nothing is now known of any right of the king to the early crop, Keil, in accordance with his figurative conception of the vision in general, maintains that **the king** is Jehovah, and the mowing denotes the judgments He has already decreed upon Israel. But this is plainly an inconsistent mingling of the sign with the thing signified. Even if we adopt the symbolical interpretation, still the feature mentioned in the supposed comparison, *i. e.*, in the process taken from actual life, must have a definite meaning. For one cannot, on account of the *signification* of a comparison, attribute to it features which in themselves are foreign to it. Therefore we must assume a mowing of the early crop by the king, whether only as a fact in the present case, or as a custom, even if we know nothing from other sources of any such right.

Ver. 2. **Plants of the land.** Keil says that this does not mean the second crop just mentioned, but vegetable growth suited for the food of men. When this was devoured, the second crop of grass began to grow. But if the second crop itself had been devoured, the intercession of the prophet would have come too late. This is incorrect. The prophet sees a *complete* destruction of what had sprung up, and just because this image with its consequent misery stands before his eyes, he prays for the entire removal of it. "The plants of the earth,' therefore mean, certainly not the second crop in particular, but all vegetable growth in general; yet in any event the grass is included. Nor can it be inferred from the conclusion of ver. 1 that this second crop was conceived of as not yet grown. Rather on the contrary it was when the locusts were formed; still we cannot assume that they at first spared it and attacked only the plants.

(b.) Vers. 4–6. *Second Vision.* **Devouring fire** = Drought. Ver. 4. "He called to contend with fire" = he called the fire in order to punish with it. **The flood**, etc. = even the deepest waters should be dried up by the "fire."

Ver. 6. **This also**, *i. e.*, as well as the threatening contained in the first vision.

2. Vers. 7–9. *The Third Vision*, the **plumb-line.** The downfall of Israel is announced. The vision is introduced just like the two preceding, but unexpectedly has a different result. Even the symbol used — plumb-line — indicates this. But Jehovah Himself gives the explanation to the prophet, and shows that the reference is to a hostile invasion which shall certainly fall upon the kingdom as a judgment. This is the more terrible, because in such vivid contrast with the foregoing.

Ver. 7. The **wall** may be considered an image of Israel, which resembled such a solid, well-constructed wall, built, as it were, by Jehovah with a plumb-line. And now Jehovah comes again with a plumb-line, not however to build up but to tear down. As carefully and thoroughly as the wall had been erected, even so carefully should it be destroyed. **In the midst** is emphatic. The Lord's judgment strikes not an outwork, but the very centre. Like the plumb-line it turns neither to the right nor to the left, nor varies at all from its aim. No longer will Jehovah **pass by** = **spare.** This naturally refers to the previous threats which had been withdrawn.

Ver. 9. Specifies the "middle" which is to be struck by the judgment, namely, the idolatrous sanctuaries of the people, and the king's house, *i. e.*, the monarchy, for in truth with the fall of this house, "the power of kingdom would be broken." (Keil.)

3. Vers. 10–17. Opposition to the prophet at Bethel on account of his predictions. New prophecies of wrath. **Priest of Bethel** is plainly the high priest in the sanctuary of the golden calf at Bethel. **In the midst of the house of Israel**

= in the religious centre of the kingdom, at Bethel. For it was from Bethel (ver. 13) that he was ordered away.

Ver. 11. **By the sword shall Jeroboam die,** cf. ver. 9; here the head of the house is named, but this was naturally included in the house itself. But the threat in the present form sounds more severely, and hence not without design is it thus recited in the accusation.

Ver. 12. Amaziah informs the king concerning the prophet, not so much in order to procure his punishment, as to justify the banishment which he proposed. But he represents it to the prophet in such a way as to effect a courteous removal. Hence the command comes in the form of good advice, — **Flee, eat bread,** etc. = there you may earn your bread by your prophecies. He considers prophesying a calling which Amos pursued for a living — a view against which the prophet guards (ver. 14) in his answer. **For a king's sanctuary** = founded by the king, clothed with regal authority. **A house** = **seat of the kingdom** = a royal capital. Therefore nothing should be said against the king! Unconscious, bitter satire on "the sanctuary," where all was decided by respect for the king, not for truth, nor for God's command.

Ver. 14. **No prophet,** *i. e.*, by profession. **Prophet's son,** *i. e.*, scholar, have never been trained in the prophetic schools — **gatherer of sycamores** refers to the direction in ver. 12. There eat thy bread. Amos says that he need not go anywhere for the sake of bread, nor did he come to Bethel or Israel for a better support. As a herdsman he had been accustomed to be content with little; that was enough for him and he sought no more. And at any moment he could return to that occupation. If he were now prophesying in Israel and acting independently, he did this not out of selfish aims, but according to ver. 15, only because he must, in obedience to a divine command. Whoever therefore would hinder this, sets himself against Jehovah. Therefore Amos announces to Amaziah the punishment he is to suffer when the judgment comes upon Israel.

Ver. 16. In return for his endeavor to stop the mouth of Jehovah's prophet, he must bear the announcement of his own doom.

Ver. 17. **Wife become an harlot,** to be dishonored at the storming of the city. **Thy land** = landed possession, **unclean land** = among the heathen. This presupposes his exile, and with that the exile of the whole people. The latter is expressly threatened in the conclusion; and thus is confirmed what Amaziah had charged before the king (ver. 11), although that threat was not uttered by Amos in ver. 9.

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL.

1. Divine judgments are announced by the prophets with so much boldness that men might easily attribute to them a lack of tenderness as if they had no regard to the sadness and misery certain to follow from what they announce. But how wrong this would be! They do feel and that very deeply. They seek by the announcement to prevail on men to repent while there is yet time, and thus forestall the impending judgments. Certainly, as they have intense moral convictions and firmly believe in the truth of a moral government of the world, they distinguish between a people ripe of judgment and one that is not. In the latter case they intercede with God for the people. So pressed are they with love and desire to see the nation delivered or spared, that, although they best know the holy earnestness of God as judge, they go to meet Him and wrestle for forgiveness. Thus the reproach of a want of compassion fails to lie in the least upon them, but rather passes over to God, the Holy. But —

2. Even He is not truly liable to it. "It shall not be!" therein his mercy set itself against his justice and overcomes it. Thus is it proved the mightier. "The Lord repented" — not surely as if He would confess the unrighteousness of his threatening, but merely to express the frank, positive withdrawal of the threat. What was threatened was deserved, but still the punishment as destructive has not yet become a necessity. God can still spare. If the stroke did fall, there would be no unrighteousness in God, and also just as little, if it did not. How the case stands only He who is the searcher of hearts and the Judge of all the earth can certainly know. But men may and should presume that forbearance is possible, and therefore should intercede. Even this has its limits, and cannot be a duty under all circumstances, otherwise the conviction of a moral government of the world would grow weak. It is therefore by no means of course a mark of a godly mind, but it is to be highly esteemed when in men like the prophets who consider God's punitive righteousness a holy truth, it manifests itself as an expression of love for their fellow-men; and then, too, it is efficacious. That it has efficacy indicates its high importance. It affects the action even of God Himself, and thus conditions the destiny of men, toward whom He would have acted otherwise without these intercessions than He actually has done for the sake of them. This to be sure is a position which only a theism having full faith in a personal God can allow. But such a faith involves just this, as appears by the Holy Scriptures, which, standing on the ground of an actual theism, know nothing else than that intercession has such an efficacy, and everywhere speak of it as a matter that is self-evident. It is therefore clearly impossible to accept the Biblical theism, and at the same time deny the power of prayer. The question is then whether we will admit the latter, or deny theism, and with it religion in general which necessarily presupposes it. If any will not accept the latter alternative, then they must demand of science that, instead of affirming a conception of God drawn from the assumed impossibility of a theism which maintains a real efficiency of prayer with God, it should either correct its idea of God, or, if this be not allowed, should admit its inability to come to a satisfactory conclusion, and thus exercise a modesty, which so far from being degrading, would be honorable.

3. Impending judgments are here set forth by the prophet in visions; partly such as in themselves disclose the judgment God is about to execute; partly such as contain a symbolical action which afterwards is distinctly explained by God. The appearance of visions here is something new. But it must be admitted that prophetic speech and vision stand nearer together than would appear at first blush. Even in the prophetic word there lies in a sense what is substantially a vision, since the prophet at first "sees" what He is to announce; for which reason the prophet is called a "seer" (even in our chap. v. 12), and the prophetic speech "a vision," 2 Sam. vii. 17; Is. xxii. 5; i. 1, and the word "to see" is used simply of prophecies or prophetic utterances. If therefore Amos in chaps.

i.–vi. announces punishment in the most various forms, fire, plunder, desolation, killing, we must believe that through the divine efficiency such images presented themselves to his inner intuitions as incited him to the warnings and exhortations which he uttered through the power inwrought in him by the same Spirit. The two first visions afford us a glance into these inner processes. But no details of the judgment follow, because the threatened evil is averted by prayer. On the other hand, we must not obliterate the distinction between prophetic speech and vision. From the inward contemplation in which God revealed his will to the prophet, it was quite a step to the literal vision. In the latter there was a complete crystallization of the perception, which was not a necessity in every case, for even without it, the perception could find expression in prophetic words. Especially does the pure symbolical vision distinguish itself from the *seeing* which lies at the basis of all prophecy, and therefore from prophetic speech as such. Here at once the image as such is the principal thing. There is urgent need, however, of explanatory speech, so that here again, only from the other side, we encounter the mutual dependence of word and vision. But the vision is at first its own end, and because it does not speak for itself but needs explanation, it is here a *vision* in the literal sense. Whether we are to suppose that in such a case the prophet is always in an ecstatic state, we do not inquire. For the most part he is, in the case of a pure symbolic vision. Since in vision, the divine revelation becomes peculiarly precious to the prophet and makes a deeper impression than bare speech, the end it seeks is apparent. This aim is first upon the prophet who sees the vision. It renders the truth which is disclosed to him and which he is to announce, more vivid and impressive, so that he cannot do otherwise than set it forth just as he has not heard but seen it, whether actually or in the shape of a symbol. But the plastic form of the vision aimed also, and ultimately in a still greater degree, at impressing the hearer. When the prophet sets forth a literal vision, that is, what he has seen, the judgment he announces takes a concrete, tangible form which gives emphasis to the utterance, and thus dispels doubt and wins attention. The discourse seizes one more firmly when it is united with an image, even though it be symbolical; and in a certain sense this latter kind of image is still more impressive, because it is somewhat mysterious, and thus provokes attention to the explanation, and this again for that reason prints itself deeper on the mind, because it awakens surprise that a symbol so unpretending should have such a weight of significance. Hence the reason appears why visions make their appearance in the conclusion of our book. There was in the sense declared, *i. e.*, not so much in fact as in form, a climax in the revelations to the prophet and therefore in the disclosure to the people. Since the direct statement of his message respecting the certainty of the judgment and the ripeness of the people for it, appeared not to be enough; at last, to leave nothing undone, these things were brought under the eye in the form of plastic visions which the prophet saw and naturally repeated to his hearers. The discourses therefore now have at least a negative efficiency in the opposition to which they aroused the priest Amaziah. (It is certainly wrong therefore to refer these visions with the narrative depending on them to an earlier period than the foregoing discourses.) Thus visions occur, as we see, in one of the oldest prophets. It may be asked, why do the other older prophets have either none at all or only faint traces of them? It is hardly a sufficient reply to refer the matter to the free action of the divine Spirit. Yet this would not be incorrect if we included with it the subjective factor in the case, since men allow that it stands in close connection with the separate individuality of the prophets. Not every one of these was equally inclined to this mode of representation, but one more than another, since a certain preponderance of the imaginative faculty, a peculiar excitability of the soul, was requisite in order to fit one for seeing visions. These are found in Amos, and we can easily see a certain natural affinity between the herdsman Amos with his quick sensibilities and the formation of outward visions. As to the visions in Ezekiel and Jeremiah, we refer to the Commentary on those prophets.

4. The centre, the heart of a nation and kingdom, is found in its sanctuaries and capital. From these proceeds its life; yes, as they are, so is the life of the whole people, either sound, or diseased, or altogether rotten. If the heart is corrupt, the blow must at last fall on this, otherwise no help is possible. The sanctuary of a nation is its chief nerve. But upon this the court, the secular government, exerts a powerful influence. If it uses this influence to subdue the sanctuary into an instrument of its own plans and thus corrupts it, the whole people is corrupted; and its guilt becomes so much the greater and God's judgment the more certain. How significant is it that the priest can oppose no contrary testimony to the prophetic word! All he can do is to denounce Amos to the king, and thus call in the secular power. Naturally enough; for he is the court-priest, and is stationed at Bethel, which is, as he says with a *naive* candor, "a king's sanctuary and a seat of the kingdom." He obviously means to say something of great moment which will awe the prophet, and is not conscious of the poverty of the claim he makes for the sanctuary. As sacred it should take its authority from God, and its highest boast should be that is a sanctuary of God. Certainly it is of no avail to root its authority in that of the great and noble, for then it becomes a mere tool of state craft. A testimony against all *Cäsareopapismus*, a warning to every state Church never to forget where all Church authority strikes its roots,—not in the protection of the state nor in civil privileges, but only in the Word of God; and that the highest glory even of the strongest established Church should be that it has, not the state, but God and his Word on its side.

5. "There eat thy bread!" This is certainly the main thing in the view of the idol's high-priest. He sees in office only a means of "bread." Therefore without scruple he ascribes the same view to Amos. But the true prophet repels the charge with dignity. He seeks not for money or means, he needs it not; he does not once claim the title of prophet, for he had nothing to do with the title. When he came forth as a prophet, it was not for the sake of the name or the office any more than it was for bread, but solely in obedience to God's direction. But as he did not seek reward, neither did he shun danger or persecution; he knew that the divine commission to announce wrath to a godless people involved peril, but he did not therefore forbear. He did not allow himself to be intimidated by threats. Even if men would not hear him but would try to close his mouth, he would not be silent. He must speak, because he bore a divine command

6. Strong faith belongs to the calling of a prophet who is to announce God's punitive wrath. And not only that; but quite independent of the duty of reproving the lofty, a high measure of faith is needed in order to maintain and firmly to utter, in the midst of a degenerate race, the conviction that God still rules and will at last vindicate his honor and his law, and show Himself as Lord and Judge. This point may be weakened by a reference to the fact that the prophets did not speak of themselves but only as organs of God, and made their announcements only by virtue of their commission. But however firmly we hold the objective character of the prophetic speech, the more we regard it on this side, yes, even the more the announcement of wrath is a literal prediction of a definite form, and kind and degree of punishment; still the less are we to overlook the subjective factor in the case. The prophets were not soulless instruments of the Holy Spirit, according to the mechanical theory of inspiration, but what they had to disclose, they themselves believed and were firmly convinced of, as was certainly the case with the herdsman of Tekoa. Their predictions of punishment in the face of a prevailing religious and moral corruption testified the strength of their theocratic conviction, and the measure of their vigorous faith, which enabled them to stand unmoved and declare with all confidence, the Lord — although He so long delays, and human sin appears to triumph — will lay a plumb-line in the midst of his people Israel, or as in chap. viii., the time is ripe for judgment. Certainly there is a reciprocal action between the objective factor and the subjective, between the divine revelation and the prophet's degree of faith. That was on one side conditioned by this, but so, on the other, a higher measure of confidence of faith was the fruit and effect of the divine revelations to the prophets. But in any case the strength of any one's faith who was chosen for a prophet, rooted itself in the general revelation to and in Israel, therefore especially in that which was deposited in the holy Scriptures. This school of the Spirit, consisting in the Word of God, was, as it appears, the only school which Amos ever attended, but he showed himself a very apt scholar, he was not so much an *αὐτο-* as a *θεοδίδακτος*. He had such a firm conviction of the power and majesty of God and especially of his righteousness that he was sure that He would maintain his honor and demonstrate his government. As he was thus, in the sense of 1 Cor. i. 26 ff., worthy and fit to be chosen by God for his messenger and prophet, so on the other hand that mission fully confirmed him in the assurance of faith.

[7. The latter half of this chapter (vers. 10–17) has been cited by one of the writers of Essays and Reviews, Prof. Jowett, as an illustration of his assertion that "the failure of a prophecy is never admitted in spite of Scripture and of history." But wherein is the failure here? The predictions are first, the rising against the house of Jeroboam with the sword, which was fulfilled (2 Kings xv. 10) in the slaughter of Jeroboam's son and successor by Shallum; secondly, the captivity and exile of Israel, the fulfillment of which is patent; thirdly, the terrible denunciation against Amaziah, his wife and his children, the execution of which is confessedly not recorded. But this is true of the doom pronounced upon other individuals, as Shebna (Is. xxii. 17, 18), Ahab and Zedekiah (Jer. xxix. 22), Shemaiah (Jer. xxix. 32), Pashur (Jer. xx. 6), etc. Nor is it all strange, when one considers the excessive brevity of the accounts of the later kings and revolutions. There is nothing at all impossible or improbable in the fate pronounced upon Amaziah. And "unless the execution of God's sentence upon one of the many calf-priests in Bethel is necessarily matter of history, it has rather to be shown why it should be mentioned than why it should be omitted." Surely the burden of proof lies upon the objector. — C.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

[Ver. 1. *And behold he formed* (was forming) *locusts*. The very least things then are as much in his infinite mind as what we call the greatest. The same power of God is seen in creating the locust as the universe. But further, God was framing them for a special end, not of nature, but of his moral government in the correction of man. In this vision He opens our eyes and lets us see Himself framing the punishment for the deserts of sinners, so that when hail, mildew, caterpillars, or some hitherto unknown disease wastes our crops, we may think not of secondary causes but of our Judge. (Pusey.)

Ver. 2. *Forgive, I beseech thee*. He sees sin at the bottom of the trouble, and therefore concludes that the pardon of sin must be at the bottom of the deliverance, and prays for that in the first place. Whatever calamity we are under, personal or public, the forgiveness of sin is that which we should be most earnest with God for. (M. Henry.)

Ver. 3. *The Lord repented for this*. See the power of prayer! See what a blessing praying people, praying prophets are to a land! Ruin had many a time broken in, had they not stood in the breach. See how ready, how swift God is to show mercy. (M. Henry.)

Ver. 4. *God called to contend by fire*. Man by rebellion challenges God's omnipotence. God sooner or later accepts the challenge. If man escapes with impunity, then he had chosen well in rejecting God. If not, what folly and misery was his short-sighted choice; short-lived in its gain; its loss, eternal! Fire stands as the symbol and summary of God's most terrible judgments. It spares nothing, leaves nothing, not even the outward form of what it destroys. (Pusey.) — C.]

Ver. 5. We should pray even for those who in our judgment are worthy of punishment. We may at least implore God's mercy on their behalf. Perhaps He will forgive and grant space for repentance. He desires not the death of the sinner, but that he turn and live. On this ground they who know the mind of God, always intercede even for the worst of sinners; although if the judgment falls, they humbly adore the holiness of God's ways but do not murmur.

[Ver. 7. *The Lord stood — with a plumb-line*. There was so to speak an architectural design in God's work of destroying Israel no less than in his former favor in building him up. God does everything according to measure, number and weight. As one said of old, "The Deity is a perfect geometrician." (Wordsworth.)

Ver. 10. *Amos has conspired*, etc. Amaziah, the high-priest, thought that the craft whereby he had his wealth was endangered. To Jeroboam, however, he says nothing of these fears, but makes it an affair of state. He takes the king by what he thought to be his weak side, fear for his own power or life. Similar was the experience of Jeremiah, of our Lord and of his Apostles. And so the

heathen who were ever conspiring against the Roman emperors went on accusing the early Christians as disloyal, factious, impious, because they did not offer sacrifice for the emperors to false gods, but prayed for them to the true. (Pusey.)

Ver. 11. On the supposition that Amaziah wilfully distorted Amos's words, the same writer remarks justly enough, "A lie mixed with truth is the most deadly form of falsehood, the truth serving to gain admittance for the lie and to color it. In slander, and in heresy which is slander against God, truth is used to commend the falsehood and falsehood to destroy the truth." So on the latter clause, "Amaziah omits both the ground of the threat and the hope of escape urged upon them. He omits too the prophet's intercession for his people and selects the one prediction which could give a mere political character to the whole. Suppression of truth is a yet subtler character of falsehood."

Ver. 12. *Go, eat thy bread.* Do thou live by thy trade there, and let me live by my trade here. (Jerome). Worldly men always think that those whose profession is religious make a gain of godliness. Interested people cannot conceive of one disinterested; nor the insincere of one sincere. (Pusey.)

Ver. 13. *It is the king's chapel,* etc. All claims of reverence for a church simply and merely as a national establishment, independently of divine institution, are no better than these assertions of Amaziah. The first royal propounder of what is now called Erastianism was, as far as we know, Jeroboam I.; the first priestly advocate of it, as far as we know, was Amaziah. Jerome, in his note here, applies these words to the Arians who appealed to Arian emperors, supporting their dogmas, and persecuting the orthodox teachers, by the secular arm. When in the fourth century Catholic bishops of Spain invoked the power of the Emperor Maximus and would have put the Priscillianists to death, they were sternly rebuked and opposed by the saintly and apostolic bishop, Martin of Tours. (Wordsworth.)

Ver. 14. *I was a herdman.* One of that class to which Abraham and Moses and David had belonged; but not rich in fields and herds, in men-servants and maid-servants, like the first; nor learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, like the second; nor with any, the most distant intimation that he might one day be the shepherd of a people, like the third. (F. D. Maurice.)

Ver. 15. *The Lord took me,—the Lord said unto me.* As the Apostles, when forbidden to teach in the name of Jesus, answered, we must obey God rather than man, so Amos, when forbidden by the idol-priests to prophecy, not only prophecies, showing that he feared God bidding more than their forbidding, but boldly and freely denounces the punishment of him who endeavored to forbid and hinder the Word of God. (Jerome.)

Ver. 16. *Drop nothing,* etc. God's Word comes as a gentle dew or soft rain, not beating down, but refreshing; not sweeping away as a storm, but sinking in and softening even hard ground, all but the rock; gentle so as they can bear it. God's Word was to men such as they were to it; dropping like the dew on those who received it: wearing, to those who hardened themselves against it. (Pusey.)

Ver. 17. *Thy wife shall be dishonored.* Thou teachest idolatry which is spiritual harlotry; and thou shalt be punished by harlotry in thine own house for thy sin. (Wordsworth.) — C.]

Chapter VIII.

Fourth Vision: Israel ripe for Destruction. Days of Mourning threatened against the Ungodly. Afterwards a Famine of the Word.

1 Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me,
And behold, a basket with ripe fruit.[1]
2 And he said, What seest thou, Amos?
And I said, A basket with ripe fruit.
Then said Jehovah to me,
"The end[2] is come to my people, Israel;
I will not pass by them any more.
3 And the songs of the palace[3] shall howl
In that day, saith the Lord Jehovah;
Corpses in multitude; everywhere has he[4] cast them forth; Hush!"[5]

4 Hear this, ye who pant[6] for the poor,
And to destroy the meek[7] of the earth,
5 Saying, when will the new moon be over,
That we may sell grain,
And the Sabbath, that we may open wheat?
Making the ephah small and the shekel great,
And falsifying the scales of deceit;
6 Buying the poor for silver,

And the needy for a pair of shoes,
And the refuse of the wheat will we sell.
7 Jehovah hath sworn by the pride of Jacob,
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.
8 Shall not the earth tremble for this,
And every dweller therein mourn?
And it shall rise up, all of it, like the Nile,[8]
And shall heave and sink[9] like the Nile of Egypt.
9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord Jehovah,
That I will cause the sun to go down at noon,
And make it dark to the earth in clear day;
10 And will turn your festivals into mourning,
And all your songs into lamentation;
And will bring sackcloth upon all loins,
And baldness upon every head;
And will make it[10] like the mourning for an only son,
And the end of it like[11] a bitter day.

11 Behold, days are coming, saith the Lord Jehovah,
When I will send a hunger into the land,
Not a hunger for bread nor a thirst for water,
But to hear the words of Jehovah.
12 And they shall stagger from sea to sea,
And rove about from the north even to the east,
To seek the Word of Jehovah, and shall not find it.
13 In that day the fair virgins shall faint,
And the young men, for thirst.
14 They who swear by the sin of Samaria,
And say, By the life of thy God, O Dan!
And, By the life of the way of Beersheba!
They shall fall and rise no more.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — קַיִץ, harvest, summer, here = summer-fruit, or gathered fruit, *i. e.*, fully ripe, as 2 Sam. xvi. 1; Micah vii. 1.

[2 Ver. 2. — The paronomasia in קַיִץ and קֵץ is marked and forcible. Cf. Ezek. vii. 6.]

3 Ver. 3. — הֵיכָל here manifestly is *palace*, not *temple*.

4 Ver. 3. — הִשְׁלִיךְ has Jehovah for its subject (Keil). Others take it impersonally (Henderson), but Wordsworth supplies "every one" as the subject.

5 Ver. 3. — הָס is by some, as E. V., rendered as an adverb = *quietly*; but always elsewhere it is an interjection, and should be so considered here.

6 Ver. 4. — שֹׁאֲפִים, = pant after [like a dog or wild beast yelping and panting after its prey. Wordsworth]. This sense is clearly required by the second member, where שֹׁאֲפִים is to be supplied before לְהַשְׁבִּית.

7 Ver. 4. — עֲנִיֵּי. There seems no reason for departing from the textual reading here.

8 Ver. 8. — כָּאֹר is a defective form for כַּיְאֹר (cf. ch. ix. 5), a reading which is found in many of the MSS.

9 Ver. 8. — נִשְׁקְהָ is a softened form for נִשְׁקְעָה, which is given in the Keri, and also in many MSS. Cf. שָׁקְעָה, ch. ix. 5.

10 Ver. 10. — The suffix in שַׂמְתִּיהָ refers to the following אֵבֶל [but Keil makes it refer to all that has previously been mentioned as done upon that day. So Pusey. Henderson refers it to אֶרֶץ, understood.

11 Ver. 10. — The כְּ in כְּיוֹם, is *Caph. veritatis.*

12 Ver. 12. — וְנָעוּ. This word is used of the reeling of drunkards, of the swaying to and fro of trees in the wind, of the quivering of lips, and then of the unsteady seeking of persons bewildered, looking for what they know not where to find. Pusey.]

13 Ver. 14. — דֶּרֶךְ. Meier's correction of this into דֹּדְךָ, = thy beloved, is conjectural and needless.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. Vers. 1–3. *Fourth Vision.* **The basket with ripe fruit.** No more forbearance. Ver. 1. This basket is an image of a people ripe for judgment. The play upon words between the original for 'ripe fruit" and that for "end," indicates more, clearly the necessary result of the ripeness, namely, the downfall of the people.

Ver. 3. Songs become howlings — wherefore? The answer follows: because of the multitude of the dead. The exclamation **Hush!** is an admonition to bow beneath the tremendous severity of the divine judgment.

Vers. 4–14. What has been briefly expressed in vers. 1–3 is here expanded into a longer discourse, the sinful conduct of the great which makes them ripe for judgment, and the heavy penalty which they must suffer.

(a.) Vers. 4–6. **Hear this, ye who,** etc. A description of their wanton course. They pant after the poor and destroy the meek by grasping all property for themselves. Cf. Job xxii. 8; Is. v. 8. This is further defined in the two following verses, in which the prophet makes the men describe their own feelings and conduct.

Ver. 5. They cannot even wait for the end of the festival in order to resume their traffic. The **new moon** was a holiday, like the Sabbath, on which trade and business ceased. To **open wheat** = to open the granaries; cf. Gen. xli. 56. What Joseph did for the benefit of the poor, these did for their own advantage, making usurious gains from others' poverty. With this they united fraud; by diminishing the measure and increasing the shekel = by demanding one of greater weight than the right standard; and by falsifying the scales = using scales arranged so as to cheat.

Ver. 6.. Thus the poor man was made so poor that he was compelled to sell himself either for a piece of silver which he owed, or for a pair of shoes which he had gotten and was unable to pay for. Thus he could not meet the smallest expenditure. To complete the case, only the refuse grain was sold to them, for which yet they had to pay the same as for good grain.

(b.) Vers. 7–14. *Punishment of such wickedness.* (1.) Vers. 7–10. **Hath sworn by the pride of Jacob,** *i. e.*, by himself who was the pride and glory of Israel. "By leaving such sins unpunished He would deny his glory in Israel." (Keil.)

Ver. 8. Therefore or **for this**, namely, for these deeds. These are Jehovah's words, and carry out the thought of "not forgetting the deeds," by a delineation of the impending judgment. The question, **Shall not,** etc., is intended to forestall the idea that such things could be left unpunished. It is incorrect to refer the "for this," to the punishment as if it were intended to emphasize that. The form of the speech, *i. e.*, the question, does not suit this view; and besides, in that case the punishment itself would be really indicated only in ver. 7, so that this unusual prominence of its impressiveness would be without a motive. The same words recur in ch. ix. 5, but there as a description of God's omnipotence, manifesting itself, however, in judgments. **The earth heaves,** because the Lord touches it (ch. ix. 5). The trembling of the earth as a heaving and sinking is explained by comparison with the rise and fall of the Nile.

Ver. 9. **In that day,** *i. e.*, the day of the judgment, in which what has just been mentioned is to take place. In close connection with the trembling of the earth is its becoming dark: the one is not conceivable without the other. At bottom ver. 8 describes a return of the earth to its original condition of chaos — **the sun go down at midday;** not a mere eclipse, but a catastrophe which subverts the order of nature. [An eclipse is not the "going down" of the sun. The minute calculations of Hitzig and Michaelis, repeated and extended by Pusey, are therefore quite aside from the purpose. — C.]

Ver. 10 describes more minutely the general mourning already touched upon in ver. 8. Cf. v. 3; ch. v. 16; Hosea ii. 13. **Baldness upon every head.** The shaving of a bald place was a sign of mourning. Cf. Is. iii. 24.

(2.) Vers. 11–14. A new and peculiar trait in the delineation of the judgment, **the bitter day.** The Word of God, which men now despise, they will then long for, but in vain. Too late! This threat bears obliquely upon the insatiable avarice of those who live in luxury through their oppression of the poor. At the same time they are the persons who now will not listen to the Word of God.

Ver. 12. **They stagger,** because plagued by hunger and thirst. **From sea to sea,** indefinitely, the sea being conceived of as the end of the earth (Ps. lxxii. 8). **From the north to the east** = from north to south, and from east to west, *i. e.*, to every quarter of the globe.

Ver. 13. So great is the torment of this unsatisfied hunger and thirst that the strongest succumb to it; these are individualized as the **young men and the maidens**; if they fail, much more the weak.

Ver. 14. **The sin of Samaria** = that by which Samaria sins, the golden calf at Bethel. This is the most probable explanation, because of the corresponding expression in the next clause, **the god of Dan** = the golden calf there. **By the life of the way**; by the life of, is a customary formula of swearing, here improperly used in reference to a thing. **The way of Beersheba** = the way by which men go to Beersheba, to the worship there. The swearing by these objects shows that the young men and maidens are worshippers of these idols and make pilgrimages to Beersheba.

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL.

1. According to our chapter the ripeness of the people for judgment is due to the violence and injustice practiced by the rich and noble upon the poor. These are peculiarly flagitious sins which call down the judgments of God. As such a statement reveals to us a degree of moral corruption which is frightful, so we learn from the severity with which the sins are rebuked and condemned, not only the spirit of justice but also the compassion which belongs to the religion of the Old Testament. It desires that every one, even the poorest, should have his rights, and even comes forward to protect the poor as such against the violence of the rich. They have a counsellor in God, who, as He protects them by the law, continues to do so by the penalties imposed upon the transgressors of the law. He does indeed bear long with those transgressors who oppress the poor, so that it may appear as if He had forgotten them; but as He owes, so to speak, the duty of sympathy with the poor and their necessities, so does He also that of forbearance with their oppres-

sors, because He desires not the death of the sinner but rather that he would turn and live.

2. The frightful severity of God's judgments, so far from being opposed to the compassion which cares for the poor and feeble, is rather in full harmony with it. The modern polemical spirit against the Old Testament descriptions of this severity, betrays its origin too plainly; it knows nothing in truth of sin, and therefore nothing of the divine judgment upon sin. It fails to see that the love which it claims for its God, really becomes the greatest harshness, since it denies the possibility of the punishment of sinners and therefore any efficacious opposition to the unrighteousness wrought by them. Only a God who is truly *terror malorum* can truly be *amor bonorum*. Moreover we do as a matter of fact continually meet with occurrences, in detail and in gross, which undeniably are judgments upon the sins of men, and that in these there is an execution of a law of moral government, can just as little be denied. So much the more foolish then is the opposition to the so-called ferocious God of the Jews, to the retaliatory spirit of the Old Testament. Now because men do not believe that there is and must be in God, along with, or rather for the sake of, the love which He is, strictness in judgment, He is obliged to show to a race which has lost its faith in the God of the Scriptures, by actual facts, as violent as those of the year 1870, that the storms of divine wrath are not merely outgrowths of a crude, undisciplined view of life, and tokens of a low state of culture, but a reality, planted in the midst of a century claiming to itself the highest culture. When the measure is full, these storms break forth, and a hundred times over put to flight "culture," "love," and all similar watchwords of the modern spirit. Then there often comes suddenly a "shaking" of the earth, or gloom falls upon an entire nation so that it becomes dark in bright daylight, or the festivals are turned into mourning and songs into lamentations, or all loins are clothed in sackcloth, — just when men in their blind security held such things to be impossible. Yes, times of war furnish only too striking illustrations of those words of Scripture which a race, strong in the conviction of its own leadership, coolly dismisses as a coarse and antiquated rhetoric, while it passes to the order of the day. Such fearful periods compel even an unbelieving race to forebode that the final judgment may prove a reality compared with which all preceding judgments are trifles. But faith sees in these latter a divine finger-mark pointing to the former, for which reason men of God, like the prophets, continually unite with their descriptions of intermediate judgments a reference to the last great judgment; and this the more when they describe judgments which are at least relatively decisive, inasmuch as they make an end of an entire kingdom.

3. When divine judgments come and give flaming proof of God's existence to a race which has forsaken and forgotten Him, the once despised and hated word of the Lord is appreciated again. Men "hunger and thirst" for it, but often at first not in the right way. They desire as speedily as possible to hear of promises and consolations, and to these every ear is open. But it is in vain. We now need expect no new revelation from God. We have "his Word" in the Scripture. But when this is a long time despised, it follows at last that there is no one to preach it, and without a living preacher, it is finally lost. Or if it is preached, it has no power to console, and men fail to find what they seek. Thus there ensues a longing which is not satisfied. The result is otherwise only when men bow themselves in penitence under the divine threatenings as deserved, and under the divine Spirit inwardly blame themselves for their previous apostasy. But who knows whether man will find room for repentance? Before he reaches that point, while he is in the midst of his vain longing for comfort, he may be snatched away.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

[Ver. 1. *Thus the Lord — shewed me.* The sentence of Amaziah being pronounced, Amos resumes just where he had left off before. Amaziah's vehement interruption is like a stone cast into deep waters. They close over it, and it leaves no trace. The last vision declared that the end was certain; this, that it was at hand. (Pusey.)

Ver. 2. *A basket with ripe fruit.* At harvest time there is no more to be done for the crop. Good or bad, it has reached its end and is cut down. So the harvest of Israel was come. . . Heavenly influences can but injure the ripened sinner, as dew, rain, sun, but injure the ripened fruit. Israel was ripe, but for destruction. (*Ibid.*) Rev. xvi. 18, Gather the clusters of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 3. *The songs shall howl.* When sounds of joy are turned into wailing, there must be complete sorrow. They are not merely hushed but turned into their opposite. Just the reverse is promised to the godly: Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh (Luke vi. 21). (*Ibid.*)

Ver. 5. *When will the new moon be over?* The Psalmist said, When shall I come and appear before God? These said, When will this service be over that we may be our own masters again?

Sin in wrong measures once begun is unbroken. All sin perpetuates itself; it is done again because it has been done before. But sins of a man's daily occupation are continued of necessity, beyond the simple force of habit and the ever increasing dropsy of covetousness. To interrupt them is to risk detection. How countless then their number! When human law was enforced in a city after a time of negligence, scarcely a weight was found to be honest. Prayer went up to God on the Sabbath, and fraud on the poor went up to God in every transaction on the other six days. (Pusey.)

Ver. 7. *Jehovah hath sworn*, etc. God must cease to be God, if He did not do what He sware to do — punish the oppressors of the poor. (*Ib.*) Wo, and a thousand woes, to that man that is cut off by an oath of God from all benefit by pardoning mercy. (M. Henry.) — C.] The evil deeds of the wicked are inscribed in a perpetual memorial before God; but the sins of believers are cast by Him into the depths of the sea so that they never again come into mind. Micah vii. 19. (Pf. B. W.)

[Ver. 8. *Shall not the earth tremble for this?* Those who will not tremble and mourn as they ought for national sins shall be made to tremble and mourn for national judgments. (M. Henry.)

Ver. 9. *The sun goes down at noon.* Sorrow is saddest when it comes upon fearless joy. God commonly in his mercy sends heralds of coming sorrow; very few burst suddenly upon man. Now in the meridian brightness of the day of Israel, the blackness of night should fall upon him. (Pusey.)

Ver. 10. *Turn your feasts into mourning.* As to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness

which gives them the oil of joy for mourning, so on the wicked there falls darkness in the midst of light which turns their joy into heaviness. *The end of it as a bitter day*. There is no hope that when things are at the worst, they will mend. No, the state of impenitent sinners grows worse and worse; and the last of all will be the worst of all. (M. Henry.)

Ver. 11. *Not a hunger for bread*. In death and dreariness, in exile from the land of their fathers, crushed by oppressors, hearing only of gods more cruel than those who make them, how will they hunger and thirst for any tidings of one who cares for the weary and heavy-laden, one who would have man-servant and maid, the cattle and the stranger within the gates to rest as well as the prince; of one who had fixed the year of jubilee that the debtor might be released and the captive go free. O, what a longing in a land of bondage to hear of such a Being; to believe that all that had been told of Him in former days was not a dream, to have a right to tell their children that it was true for them! (Maurice.)

Ver. 12. *From sea to sea*, etc. Even the profane, when they see no help, will have recourse to God. Saul in his extremity inquired of the Lord, and He answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. (Pusey.) Such is the present condition of the Jews. They roam in restless vagrancy about the world and seek the word of God; but they find it not, because they have killed the incarnate Word revealed in the written word. (Jerome.)—C.]

Chapter IX.

Fifth Vision. The Downfall. Not even a little Grain perishes. After the Overthrow of all careless Sinners God will raise the fallen Tent of David to new Glory.

I saw the Lord standing at[1] the altar,
And He said, Smite the top[2] that the thresholds may tremble,
And dash them[3] upon the head of all,
And their remnant I will kill with the sword;
He that fleeth of them shall not flee away,
And he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered.
2 If they break through[4] into hell,
From thence will my hand take them;
And if they climb up to heaven,
Thence will I bring them down.
3 And if they hide themselves on the top of Carmel,
From thence will I search and take them out.
And if they conceal themselves from my sight in the bottom of the sea,
From thence will I command the serpent[5] and he bites them.
4 And if they go into captivity before their enemies,
From thence will I command the sword, and it slays them,
And I set mine eye upon them for evil and not for good.

5 And the Lord, Jehovah of hosts,
Who toucheth the earth and it melteth,[6]
And all that dwell therein mourn;
And the whole of it riseth up like the Nile,
And sinketh down like the Nile of Egypt,
6 Who buildeth his upper chambers[7] in the heaven,
And his vault,[8]—over the earth He founded it,
Who calleth to the waters of the sea,
And poureth them out upon the face of the earth;
Jehovah is his Name.

7 Are ye not as the sons of the Cushites unto me,
Ye sons of Israel? saith Jehovah.
Have not I brought up Israel from the land of Egypt,
And the Philistines from Caphtor,
And the Syrians from Kir?
8 Behold, the eyes of the Lord, Jehovah, are upon the sinful kingdom,[9]
And I will destroy it

From off the face of the earth,
Saving that[10] I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord.
9 For behold, I, I will command
And will shake the house of Israel among all nations,
As one shaketh in a sieve,
And not even a little grain[11] shall fall to the ground.
10 By the sword shall all the sinners of my people die,
Who say, The evil will not overtake nor reach[12] us.
11 In that day will I raise up
The fallen hut[13] of David,
And wall[14] up its breaches,
And raise up its ruins,[15]
And build it[16] as in the days of old;
12 That they may possess[17] the remnant of Edom and all the nations
Upon whom my name is called,
Saith Jehovah who doeth this.
13 Behold, the days are coming, saith Jehovah,
When the ploughman reaches to the reaper,
And the treader of grapes to the sower of seed;
And the mountains drop new wine,
And all the hills melt:
14 And I bring back the captives[18] of my people, Israel,
And they build the waste cities, and inhabit them,
And plant vineyards and drink their wine,
And make gardens and eat their fruit.
15 And I plant them upon their land,
And they shall no more be torn up out of their land which I gave to them,
Saith Jehovah, thy God.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1.—עַל, used with נִצָּב = *at* or *by*. Cf. Gen. xviii. 2; 1 Sam. iv. 20.]

2 Ver. 1.—כַּפְתּוֹר = knob, h. pillar-top or capital, סַף = threshold, usually that over which one enters a building, but also = the foundation-beams in which the posts are inserted. So here.

3 Ver. 1.—בְּצַעַם for בְּצָעֵם (Green, *Heb. Gr.*, 125, 1). The suffix ם— has no exact antecedent. It cannot be referred naturally to סִפִּים, nor in order to admit of such reference should the latter word be altered to mean "projecting roof of the temple supported by pillars." It belongs to כַּפְתּוֹר, and either denotes that the capital on various pillars was struck, or the thought is that one capital was dashed into many pieces. [Keil and Hengstenberg refer it to both the capitals and the thresholds or the entire building, which is greatly preferable.]

4 Ver. 2.—חָתַר with בְּ = to break through into.

5 Ver. 3.—נָחָשׁ = water-serpent, not to be more closely defined—elsewhere called לִוְיָתָן or תַּנִּין. Is. xxvii. 1.

6 Ver. 5.—מוּג, lit. to *melt;* here denotes the dissolution of the earth. Others [Fürst] = to fail through fear, to quake. The latter half of the verse is repeated with insignificant alterations from chap. viii. ver. 8.

7 Ver. 6.—מַעֲלוֹת = עֲלִיּוֹת, Ps. civ. 3, *lit.*, places to which one has to ascend, upper chambers, lofts.

8 Ver. 6.—אֲגֻדָּה, vault = רָקִיעַ.

9 Ver. 8.—בַּמַּמְ׳, *lit.*, they rest upon the sinful kingdom, in order to destroy it. [Verbs and nouns expressive of anger are connected by בְּ with the object on which the anger rests. Cf. Ps. xxxiv. 17 (Hengst.)].

10 Ver. 8.—אֶפֶס כִּי introduces a limitation.

11 Ver. 9.—צְרוֹר, *lit.*, a thing tightly bound together; hence anything solid, as a pebble or little stone (2 Sam. xvii. 13); here, a kernel or grain of corn, as opposed to the loose, dusty chaff.

12 Ver. 10.—הִקְדִּים בַּעַד, *lit.*, to come between = so as to block up the way of escape. [Usage requires us to render, "to come to meet one round about," *i. e.*, from every side.]

13 Ver. 11.—סֻכַּת, *lit.*, a booth, here a hut.

14 Ver. 11.—גָּדַרְתִּי, the "close" of E. V., is better replaced by "wall" from the margin. The plural suffix in פִּרְ׳ probably refers to "walls" understood. [Keil and Hengstenberg say that it indicates that both kingdoms are intended.

15 Ver 11.—The suffix in הֲרִסֹ׳ refers to Israel understood [but others refer it to David].

16 Ver. 11. — The suffix in בְּנִיתִ֑יהָ all agree, refers to the fallen hut.

17 Ver. 12. — יִירְשׁוּ, take possession of, in reference to Num. xxiv. 18.

18 Ver. 14. — שׁוּב שְׁבוּת. Keil vainly contends against explaining this formula as meaning "to restore the captives," and insists that it = to turn a state of misery into one of prosperity. [Hengstenberg strongly maintains the latter view, which indeed in such cases as Job xlii. 10 must be admitted.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

A Fifth Vision. In the four previous visions, the Lord showed the prophet only what He was about to do; in this one the prophet sees the Lord actually engaged in executing his judgment.

1. Vers. 1–4, describe an annihilating judgment which none can escape. Ver. 1. **The altar** here cannot possibly denote the one at Jerusalem, in spite of all that Keil urges to the contrary. In that case the object of the vision would be one essentially different from that which is mentioned in the threatening, namely, all Israel, and would be Judah in particular, and this, without any indication of the change. There is the less reason for assuming such a change, since the chapter does not give any statement of sins as the ground of the judgment the execution of which it records. The reason of the omission is that the necessity for this judgment has been already shown in the setting forth of the sins of the ten tribes. Hence our chapter treats of a judgment upon this kingdom. That judgment has already been threatened and the grounds of it assigned, whereas one of another kind would require the reasons for it to be stated. But there is an entire lack of such reasons; for the prophet, in spite of what he says in chap. ii. ver. 4, does not consider Judah as deserving such a complete destruction of its political existence as this chapter describes. Such a judgment corresponds to the condition of things in Israel, but not at all to that in Judah so far as known to the prophet. And it by no means follows that because an annihilating stroke afterwards fell upon this kingdom, the prophet announced it here. That would be to take a very unhistorical view of prophecy. We should rather say that if he announced such a fate, he would also have described Judah as meriting it. But he does no such thing. Therefore he knows of no such corruption in Judah, regards its measure of iniquity as not yet full, and hence knows nothing of the judgment which was one day to destroy it. But in fact, had Judah's sin become so gross, and had the prophet known of it, still it would not have been noticed in this connection, because Amos is not a prophet for Judah, but only touches that kingdom lightly, for the most part passing it over wholly. And it cannot be assumed that he threatens such a destructive visitation upon Judah equally with Israel, whose desert of punishment he has set forth not only immediately before, but in a continuous series of chapters. A fundamental law of prophecy is to balance, so to speak, the sinfulness and the judgment against each other. But no such statement concerning Judah is found in our chapter. In fine, it is only by violence that the phrase, **the sinful kingdom**, can be understood to mean "Israel and Judah embraced in one." No, if the kingdom of Israel is so expressly and amply described as sinful and then expressly named "the sinful kingdom," then, according to all the rules of a sound hermeneutics, certainly this kingdom of Israel must be intended in the first place, and not at the same time another kingdom the sinfulness of which was not specially noticed.

Smite, according to the simplest view, is addressed to the prophet. For of angels (Keil) there is no mention here. The prophet is not to be merely a spectator, but takes part in the action. That he was not in a situation to do what is here enjoined is no objection, for the whole transaction takes place in vision. A blow which strikes the pillar-capitals so that the foundation-beams shake, is manifestly = a crash that brings the whole building to the ground. We are then to think of a temple. The shaking to the ground is only the first step; the stroke aims farther, namely, to break to pieces. **Upon the head of all**; the whole people is considered as assembled around the national sanctuary. What is meant, then, is a destruction, and that total. That no one can escape is expressly said afterwards, but with a change from the language of vision to that of reality. **Their remnant** refers to the **all**, and shows that it is to be understood in its full force, — should any succeed in escaping the crash of the building, even these God would slay with the sword. The universality of the destruction is also negatively set forth in the remaining clauses of ver 1, and is still farther expanded with poetical minuteness in the three following verses. Cf. Ps. cxxxix. 7, 8.

Ver. 3. **On the top of Carmel.** Named partly as a mountain which is of considerable height as compared with the sea over which it rises, and partly as a point on the extreme western boundary of the kingdom. "Whoever hides himself there, must know of no other secure refuge in all the land beside. And if there be no security there, nothing is left but the sea."

Ver. 4. Even going into captivity shall not save them.

2. Vers. 5, 6. To confirm the threatening, God is described as almighty, such illustrations being cited as show his omnipotence in destroying = He who thus speaks is the Lord, who touches the earth, etc. The first two members of ver. 5 stand in close relation to what follows, and are its foundation. Inasmuch as the Lord is enthroned in heaven, he is in a condition to call in the waters of the sea, etc. (and while such devastations are wrought in the earth, He himself is untouched by them). We are not, with Keil, to think here of "a mountain of clouds," or of rain, for the inundation is plainly stated to proceed from the sea, not from rain. Nor is it natural to admit a reference to the physical fact that the waters of the sea ascend on high in vapor in order to come down again as rain. Ver. 6, therefore is not to be regarded as an allusion to the Deluge, but rather as a marine inundation, such as often occurs in consequence of an earthquake; *e. g.*, the tidal wave in Chili in 1868.

3. Vers. 7–10. **Are ye not,** etc. Degenerate Israel should not rely upon their election; they are to be carried away. Still God in his grace will not destroy them wholly, but only sift them, and even the carrying away is to serve as a means to this end.

Ver. 7. This is the sharpest thing that can be said of Israel, namely, to liken them to the heathen. The "sons" of the Cushites, Ham's posterity, are

as highly esteemed as the "sons" of Israel. And the bringing of Israel out of Egypt avails no more than the bringing of the Syrians and Philistines out of their former dwelling-places. Caphtor, probably, = Crete, from which, according to this statement, at least a portion of the Philistines emigrated. (Others say = Kasluhim.) In chap. i. ver. 5, it was said that the Syrians should be carried away to Kir. According to the present passage, a portion of them must have emigrated from that place.

After thus rejecting Israel's claim for impunity, Amos proceeds in ver. 8 to announce the punishment once more. It is expressly said upon whom it shall fall, namely, the sinful kingdom, which can be none other than the ten tribes, who are thus sufficiently indicated. But in the second member the threatening is mitigated; there still remains grace. The distinction between Israel and the heathen which has just been denied — denied so far as Israel made it a matter of boasting, — is again set up. The preference, however, is a matter not of merit but of grace, and exists only because God will not wholly abandon his own people. **House of Jacob** is not = kingdom of Judah, denoting that this should be spared; for then it would not be a limitation of the preceding threatening which was aimed at Israel. Literally the phrase is = stock of Israel; but here, according to the prophet's aim, it means simply the ten tribes, just as these have been styled in the previous chapters, "Israel," "House of Israel." The prophet does not acknowledge two nations, but throughout designedly holds in view the *one* people, Israel, of which the kingdom of the ten tribes is only the particularly corrupt portion; *this* house of Jacob, whose punishment is here in question, shall go forth from their own land, but shall not be entirely destroyed. This latter statement does not conflict with the carrying out of what is stated in vers. 1–4. For that only denies that any one can of himself escape the threatened destruction.

How we are to understand ver. 8 is set forth in ver. 9 by a significant figure. By its dispersion Israel comes, as it were, into a sieve, in which the good corn and the dust and dirt are tossed up together. Yet this is only in order to make a more speedy separation. The solid good grains remain, only the trash falls to the ground. So with Israel.

By the sword (ver. 10), shall all the sinners of my people die, — but only these. The sinners are still marked as self-secure, by the addition, **who say, the evil will not overtake**, etc. To the thought expressed in ver. 10 we must assign a more general scope, standing as it does at the close of the book, as including in the wide sweep of the judgment a reference to Judah. For it must be supposed that the prophet sees in the same judgment which destroys Israel the execution of the threatening against Judah in chap. ii. ver. 5, only that Judah is not visited in the same degree, *i. e.*, one which destroys its national existence. The stroke penetrates deeply and destroys the sinners, but at the same time purifies, and thus paves the way immediately for Judah, and so for Israel in general, so far as it still exists, to a new prosperity by which it rises again into a kingdom as powerful and happy as ever before.

4. Vers. 11–15. **In that day will I**, etc. In the fact that the destruction is not to be absolutely total, the grace of God shines through the furious wrath of the judgment. But the grace is not limited to this negation; it advances to the positive declaration that God will magnify Israel by establishing a new condition of prosperity. This exercise of grace — so the connection of the thought proves — is not something adventitious, but is directly mediated through the action of the judgment. This judgment, just because it is so radical in its extirpation of all sinners among God's people, operates, as before remarked, in a purifying direction, and its limitation contains the condition of a new position, a new salvation, the possibility of a rich bestowment of grace. For with the removal of sinners, every reason for the divine wrath ceases, and room is afforded for such an exhibition of grace as will restore Israel to a new prosperity. Very naturally, therefore, the question is no longer about the restoration of "the kingdom of Israel," in the narrow sense of that term, for this in its separation from Judah represented apostasy from Jehovah, and a constitution exactly opposed to the true idea of a people of God. No, the divine grace shows itself in this, that after the destruction of the ungodly elements, first and chiefly in the ten tribes, but also in Judah, there arises a single but prosperous and powerful kingdom of Israel under the legitimate monarchy, which attracts to itself all the elements spared and refined by the judgment, including those which belonged to the existing ten tribes. The discourse certainly turns in ver. 11 to Judah, yet not as a separate kingdom, but only in so far as it furnishes the divinely appointed basis and point of departure for the restoration of the entire people. More than that Judah cannot be, since it is not only outwardly enfeebled and proportionately suffering, but also, in the prophet's view, contains many sinful elements and must expect the divine chastisement, through which it will become still weaker outwardly, so that its future exaltation is due only to the grace of God, who cannot let his covenant with Israel fall, cannot give up his people. This enfeebled, prostrate condition of Israel — *i. e.*, at first Judah, but also Israel because Judah alone was the true representative of Israel — is expressed in ver. 11 by **the fallen hut of David** = the Davidic monarchy, and this, in a condition of real prostration. This is set forth by calling it not a palace but a "hut," and this hut a "fallen" one; and the picture is made still more vivid by the mention of **breaches** and of **ruins**. Many expositors (among them Keil) think that the phrase, the fallen hut of David, presupposes the actual downfall of the kingdom of Judah, — in connection with the execution of the threatening in the whole chapter against Israel and Judah. But apart from what was said on this view in the comments on vers. 1, the phrase itself contradicts it. For in the downfall, not only a hut, but the house in general was prostrated. The term "hut" has its appropriate meaning only when we think of something not wholly fallen but still existing, for the manner of this existence is then pointed out by the word "hut," and is still further characterized by the epithet "fallen," as also by the following expressions, "breaches," "ruins." The restoration of captives spoken of here, can therefore be no proof of the assumption that the downfall of Judah and the Babylonish exile is presupposed in ver. 11. For while a carrying away is certainly mentioned, it is from the kingdom of Israel, and the return is included in this promise, although in the first instance it refers to Judah; since the thought is that along with the renovation of Judah, as the *one* genuine kingdom of Israel, there is bound up the return of all the Israelites held captive in heathen lands, as a constituent of that future prosperity. But, besides, there were, independent of the exile in Babylon, captives out of the kingdom of Judah, who had been dragged away by the

heathen, as we have already seen in Joel; and the prophet might therefore well suppose that there would be more, before the new period of salvation. It is not to the purpose that in the later prophets the promise of future salvation for Israel, including Judah, presupposes the foreseen destruction of the kingdom of Judah. For it is preposterous from this to infer that all had the same general view, without regard to the differences of time. Surely we cannot without ceremony transfer to the earlier prophets what belongs well enough to the later. — This fallen hut is to be raised up again, and that in such a way that the breaches shall be walled up and the prostrate ruins restored. This then is a *building* of the hut, and the result is that it becomes what it was in ancient times = in the days of David himself. This restoration of the former power and greatness is then expanded in ver. 13, where the term **possess** is an allusion to Balaam's prophecy, "And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession." The acquisition shall be easily made, being Jehovah's gift to his people. **The remnant of Edom** = what has not already been subjugated again. Edom is particularly mentioned, because while they were related to the Israelites, they were of all nations the most hostile to them. To receive possession of them is therefore a peculiar token of Israel's glory. But Israel is to gain more, even **all the nations upon whom my name is called.** This phrase manifestly refers in the first instance to the nations who by David were brought under the sway of God's people and therefore were called by Jehovah's name. Still the question recurs why the dependence on Israel was expressed in just this peculiar manner. It was to indicate a peculiar relation of these nations to Jehovah which was the reason of their subjugation. This indeed existed under David, but was not then fully realized. What then lay in intention and was contemplated in their conquest, actually occurs in the new and better time here brought into view. The nations shall so come under Israel's rule that they will bear the name of Israel's God, and be called his people, so that a conversion of the heathen — not of all, for the prophecy does not touch that point — but of heathen nations, is placed in prospect or at least intimated. (Upon the quotation in Acts xv. 16, and also the meaning of the promise in vers. 11, 12, see Doctrinal and Moral.) But to the future prosperity of Israel belongs not only national power and greatness, but also a rich blessing upon the land and thus upon the people (ver. 13), in fulfillment of the promise in Levit. xxvi. 5. What is there said of the action — the threshing shall reach unto the vintage, — is here transferred to the person who performs it. **The ploughman reaches to the reaper,** *i. e.*, the ploughing will still continue in one place, although the reaping has begun in another, which however does not mean that the crop will grow and mature so quickly, but that so much is there to plough that it lasts to the harvest. This, at all events, is the meaning of the next clause, — **The treader of grapes** (will reach) **to the sower of seed** = the vintage will last to the sowing time, so abundant is it. **The mountains drop new wine,** etc. Cf. Joel iii. 18. There the hills are said to flow with milk, here the expression is stronger, — the hills melt, as it were, dissolve themselves in pure streams of milk, new wine, honey.

Ver. 14. **I bring back the captives,** etc. This is another essential feature in the picture of Israel's future. For when the period of judgment has once elapsed, and God in his grace brings his people to a new prosperity, its members cannot longer continue under the power of the heathen, for that would be an evidence that the state of punishment still continued. As to "the captives" thus restored, see above on ver. 11. The phrase, **they build the waste cities,** etc., clearly depicts the reviving activity of those who have been restored from exile to their desolated land, and the words in ver. 15, **they shall no more be torn up, etc.,** distinctly express the final abolition of an exile. As God's direct judgments, drought, and barrenness, are to cease, so also shall the indirect, namely, desolation by a foe. Therefore they shall not merely build cities but inhabit them; not only plant vineyards, but also drink the wine (the direct reverse of chap. v. ver. 11); not only lay out gardens, but eat their fruit! And (ver. 15) especially shall the restored exiles never again be carried away by enemies. This, in immediate connection with what has just been said of the plantings which Israel is to make, is represented under the figure of a planting which shall never be torn up; at the same time with a reference to the firm "planting" formerly made by means of David, in 2 Sam. vii. 10. The higher fulfillment of this will occur only when David's fallen hut is again raised up.

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL.

1. The prophet paints in a frightful manner the vast power of the divine judgments and man's helplessness before them. God's omnipresence and omnipotence subserve his wrath; hence its energy. Nowhere can man escape Him; by no means can he protect himself; all places are accessible to God; all powers stand subject to his will. The judgment here primarily intended is one that is executed by a conquering foe. Now whence comes the crushing weight of so many conquerors, whom nothing can resist, before whom all means prove impotent? We do not understand how it is possible. Here we have the answer, here where we, as it were, glance behind the scenes. The conqueror is only the instrument of God's wrath; but this is so mighty, so irresistible, that it is no wonder that nothing can withstand the victorious foe, that every resource fails, even though it may have a hundred times in other cases brought relief and defense. If the Lord will not, all is of no avail.

2. But when the judgment is one thus executed by a foreign conqueror, it is not to be denied that the description, as indeed often in the former chapters, so especially here, transcends what usually occurs in case of a hostile invasion and conquest. It has, so to speak, an eschatological coloring. The threatened punishment is a total, final, decisive destruction of sinners. The prophet knows of none that goes beyond it. The only counterpart to it is a glorious act of grace. As surely as the latter is something definite and conclusive, so is the former. If we inquire as to the fulfillment of this threatening, confessedly one such took place for Israel in the overthrow of the kingdom. But a complete and exact fulfillment is not to be found in that event; an unprejudiced comparison shows that the prophecy transcends the experience. This fact does not show that the threatening is unfounded, but that it has an eschatological character. The prophet, indeed, sees the last decisive judgment arise, the day of the Lord (although there is no express reference to that here), but still the judgment which came historically upon the ten tribes was not this last decisive one. What he threatens against Is-

rael was, we venture to say, farther fulfilled in the last judgment upon Israel, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans; but this still awaits its complete fulfillment in the last judgment at the *Parousia* upon the entire body of the apostate members of God's people, of whom Israel was a type. In this judgment the punitive righteousness of God will be fully revealed in its frightful universality. The threatenings, as well as the promises of prophecy, find their complete fulfillment first in the New Testament, yet not in the literal Israel, but in the people of God represented by Israel in so far as it is apostate. It is not unimportant to make this clear, in order to show the incorrectness of the popular argument, that because all the threatenings have been fulfilled in the literal Israel, therefore the promises must be so likewise; that the latter are to be taken just as strictly as the former, and hence the fulfillment of such of them as have not yet come to pass, is to be expected in Israel after the flesh.

3. But the divine judgment is not a work of absolute annihilation but of sifting, to separate the wheat from the chaff. Herein is revealed the eschatological character of these judgments, in that they are so strictly just; but since the separation of the wheat and the chaff is only relative, the sparing of those who are spared must be deemed an act of grace, and so much the more, since the sparing does not stand alone and simple, but the judgment upon the ungodly is itself a purifying work for "the righteous," and cannot remain without a wholesome influence upon them; while on the other hand it is for them a deliverance, the dawn of a new prosperity which is possible only after the consummated excision of the destructive elements which provoke the wrath of God. What Amos calls "the little grain" in the sieve is substantially that which afterwards appears as the "remnant of Jacob." But still the question with Amos was not about a still surviving remnant of the people in general when he now sees the kingdom of Israel fall, nor was it whether the whole people of God should or could go down or not. Hence the term "remnant" would ill apply to those whom he sees to be spared.

4. Israel's provocation of the divine wrath in general lay in the ungodly course it took at the founding of the kingdom of the ten tribes and ever afterwards persevered in. After the destruction of this kingdom, and after the judgment which is to fall upon Judah, although this kingdom is not to be destroyed, there no longer remains any hindrance to the blooming of a new prosperity for Israel as a whole. Therefore the prophet, since it was his commission to announce the judgment of God upon all the ungodly, but especially upon the ungodly kingdom of the ten tribes, concludes, after this commission has been fulfilled, with a promise for Israel as the people of God. Under the only legitimate monarchy, the house of David, it is by God's blessing raised out of its humiliation; its power and greatness are restored as they were in David's time; the kingdom spreads out over the heathen; the land rejoices in the richest blessings; all captive exiles return, — never again to be carried away; and the kingdom has the prospect of being established forever. It is very perverse to ask if an internal renovation is not also expressed in this exaltation. What is said in ver. 11, etc., concerning deliverance and restoration, refers only to the outward prosperity of Israel, not to its internal character; but certainly an inward renewing is presupposed, for the destruction of all sinners is, as ver. 10 shows, the only way to the promised outward restitution, its *conditio sine qua non*. Subjectively it is its ground and root, while objectively all results from the grace of God, who has intended prosperity and salvation for Israel as his people, and who therefore in all his judgments upon Israel aims at last at a new and so much the higher blessing, and the establishment of a complete state of prosperity. The flourishing Israel therefore is naturally to be considered as a people serving God and converted to Him, even though nothing has been expressly said on the point. Or they are considered as his members, consisting partly of those who remained faithful, partly of such as have been converted. The emphasis with which an annihilating judgment is beforehand pronounced upon ungodliness, leaves room for no other view. Such a divine blessing as is here promised, and especially its permanence, presupposes a godly life. Although Amos says nothing of a personal Messiah, yet in the wide sense we must call this prophecy Messianic, in substance if not in form, in so far as the Messiah of the later prophets is He who introduces the consummation of the people of God, and the great time of its happiness, and it is just this final completeness and glory which is here promised.

5. As to the *fulfillment* of the prophecy, it must be said, just as in the case of Joel, that this has not taken place exactly according to the letter, for that represents the new greatness and never-ending prosperity of the kingdom of Judah and Israel as coincident with the judgment upon the ten tribes. But although this latter event was followed by happier times for Judah, still this was not what is promised here, but in place of a flourishing exaltation of the Davidic line there followed its complete prostration along with the overthrow of the kingdom. But this, as we said above, the prophet does not take into the account. For this reason, the fair prospect of Israel's future glory has maintained and still maintains its truth and validity, as it is not a product of human wish and hope, but flows from a revelation of the Holy Spirit and rests upon a view furnished by that Spirit. Nor do we deceive ourselves when we assume that the later prophets, who also foresaw and announced the downfall of Judah, found a basis for their promises in the promise of Joel and also in that of Amos which is so closely connected with it. For if such a noble future was predicted, the downfall of the kingdom could not be final, rather, not only would a remnant be saved, but there would be a lifting up out of this deep fall, a restitution after the overthrow. Israel, as the people of God by virtue of God's covenant with them, may and indeed must suffer his judgments in case of apostasy, but so far from perishing by these, rather attains a condition of greatness and power, an enduring prosperity; this is the truth forever established and fortified by our promise. A certain fulfillment was no doubt experienced in the restoration accomplished by the Jews who returned from exile. But this was by no means "the Messianic salvation," the consummation of God's kingdom in Israel. Nor can a literal fulfillment of Amos's prophesy be sought herein, because our prophet does not take into account the facts which gave occasion for that return, namely, the overthrow of the kingdom and the exile. The Messiah came in the person of Jesus Christ. Did then the promised great salvation come? Did He fulfill our promise? Not according to the letter, since by no means did a time of new grandeur break in upon Israel after the flesh; but in place of expecting any such thing in the future and seek-

ing there the fulfillment of the promise, we rather affirm that it has already begun with Christ's coming. For as, according to a principle before laid down, we have the true complement of the Old Testament in the New, so we see in Christ's salvation the fulfillment of the promise of a time of glory for Israel, since Israel (with Canaan) was only a type of the true people of God. What therefore was promised to Israel passes over by virtue of the new covenant to all who belong to Israel through faith in Christ and form the people of God. And we are not at all to expect a literal fulfillment of these engagements to a national Israel, and in the shape of temporal blessings on the stand-point of the Old Testament. For, if we did, it would follow that there must be a literal possession of the "remnant of Edom." But the boldest realist will hardly conclude that in the future Edom will again exist alongside of Israel. We may here appropriate in substance the observations of Keil, who says that "the raising up of David's fallen hut commenced with the coming of Christ and the founding of the Christian Church by the Apostles — (as to which we refer, *e. g.*, only to Luke i. 32, 33, where Jesus is represented as the restorer of David's throne, and one whose kingdom shall have no end), — and the possession of Edom and of all the other nations upon whom the Lord reveals his name, took its rise in the reception of the Gentiles into the kingdom of heaven set up by Christ. . . The land which will flow with streams of divine blessing is not Palestine, but the domain of the Christian Church, or the earth, so far as it has received the blessings of Christianity. The people which cultivate this land is the Christian Church, so far as it stands in living faith and produces the fruits of the Holy Spirit." And — we may add — so far as the Jews are converted to Christ and incorporated into the Christian community, there is "a bringing back of the captives." Still this "bringing back" is not limited to Israel after the flesh. Its fulfillment is to be sought more generally in the freedom which Christ has brought, in consequence of which believers in Him are no longer prisoners under the control of an alien power. They possess "the glorious liberty of the children of God," through their enjoyment of communion with God, — incomplete, indeed, in the first instance, just as the return from exile is not complete. But it will be through Christ. He will one day conduct all the (genuine) members of God's people out of exile and bondage into the heavenly Canaan, and no one shall ever again drive them out. But certainly this promise for the people of God first began to be fulfilled at the appearing of the Messiah and in the domain of the Christian Church. Its complete fulfillment is to be expected at the *parousia* of Christ; and then the spiritual blessing, the spiritual power and greatness, the spiritual freedom which the people of God now enjoy, will obtain a corresponding outward sensible manifestation. Inward prosperity will not lack that which is outward, yet in a higher sense than the Old Covenant understood it, since the distinction between the outward and the inward will in the main be done away. The hope of this final glory of the people of God has a right to nourish itself constantly from the prophecies which give such bright pictures of the future glory of Israel. So far these prophecies preserve constantly their significance for the religious life. By their confident and assured tone they greatly oppose and undermine the doubts awakened by the day of small things in which we live.

6. The opinion that our promise is fulfilled in Christ is confirmed in the New Testament (Acts xii. 15) by the Apostle James. He sees a fulfillment of the words of Amos (ver. 12) concerning the relation of the nations = the heathen, to the restored Israel, in Peter's statement of the effects of faith in Christ among the heathen, since these without being circumcised had received the Holy Spirit. He thus probably understands the phrase, "upon whom my name is called," in a pregnant sense = upon whom God has testified Himself as God, therefore as a promise of an inward relation of God to the heathen, but at bottom a promise of the bestowment of the Holy Ghost upon them. Therefore he regards the advices of Peter as a fulfillment of the prophetic utterance. This explanation does not conform to the original sense of the prophet's words (see above in Critical and Exegetical), just as the words immediately preceding are given by James in a form quite different from the Hebrew. For us the only important point is that James considers the fulfillment of this promise as beginning with Christ. But we may draw a farther conclusion. If James sees this statement of Amos concerning the heathen and their relation to Israel fulfilled in the appearance of Christ, in so far as that caused the reception of the Spirit by believers in Him, then certainly he regards the promise of the restoration of David's fallen hut as fulfilled in Christ. Although the promise, literally understood, treats of an outward restoration, a return of outward greatness to Israel as a kingdom, yet the tenor of the discourse is wholly different; James therefore, since he saw its fulfillment then occurring, could not possibly have cherished any dreams of an outward glorification of the kingdom of Israel to be expected in the future on the ground of the prophetic utterances. The only correct view is, that to him the people of God appeared in the closest union with the national Israel, and he saw Christ and his salvation as obtained in the first instance for the latter. The national Israel to him always stood in the foreground. But he saw the promises to the nation fulfilled in the spiritual blessings which proceeded from Christ. But it was inconsistent to take the prophet's promises literally in respect to "Israel," *i. e.*, to claim them for the national Israel, and yet not to take them literally in respect to their meaning, not to understand them as holding out an earthly greatness, a national blessing; and hence both Peter and Paul went far beyond this view. But it is remarkable that James, who was so pronounced a representative of the Judaistic tendency, should regard such a promise as we have in Amos, as fulfilled, so far as regards its meaning, in the appearance of Christ and the spiritual blessings thence resulting, without even once referring it to the second coming of the Saviour. Even he therefore is a patron of the so-called spiritual interpretation of the prophecies; and if the theological explanation here finds itself in agreement with a disciple of the Lord, and him a man of strong Jewish-Christian feeling, that is a proof that it is on the right track, and has so much the more reason for disowning the doctrine of a future glorification of the national Israel as guaranteed by the prophets.

7. In relation to the promises of prophecy, we may make the same remark as before in relation to prophetical threatenings in chap. vii., sec. 6, of Doctrinal and Moral. As the prophet is not the mere instrument of revelation without will of his own, we must, while fully acknowledging the objective ground of these promises, at the same time

regard them as evidences of the prophet's own strength of faith. While he at first on account of the prevailing sinfulness sees only punishment and downfall, a speedy outbreak of divine wrath, yet at the same time he holds firm as a rock the hope that the grace of God will return and a new salvation begin for the people of God. The divine promises made to Israel as the people of God are an anchor of his faith and a light to illumine the gloomy future before him, so that the final aim of the procedure remains to him immovably noble. If it is the old promises upon which his faith rests, these are reanimated and freshly confirmed by the new revelations he receives. But this occurs only when they are firmly believed, and therefore the utterance of them is an evidence of strength of faith.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. *Smite the top*, etc. The judgments of God when they begin are like mighty blows, which make everything tremble, if they do not altogether dash to pieces. Apostasy from God (idolatry) is that which decides the case, and at last makes the divine judgments break forth.

Vers. 2, 3. That which is our greatest confidence when God is on our side, namely, that He is everywhere present, is our terror when He is against us. [The prophet has not employed a superfluous heap of words. Every syllable is important, even though at first it may seem otherwise. The Holy Spirit designs to shake off our self-flatteries and rouse our innate torpor, that we may not think of God as of ourselves, but know that his power extends to all hiding-places. — Calvin.

Ver. 4. *And I set mine eye*, etc. The eye of God upon us is our whole hope and stay and life. It is on the confessor in prison, the martyr on the rack, the poor in their sufferings, the mourner in the chamber of death, for good. What if that eye, the source of all good, rests on his creature only for evil? — Pusey.]

Vers. 5, 6. God's omniscience and omnipresence gain their whole significance from his omnipotence. But He is as certainly almighty as He is allwise and everywhere present. He commands the earth when and as He will, and it must obey Him. If He only touch it, it trembles. But no wonder that the earth obeys Him, for it is He who rules also the heaven. [This is the hope of his servants, the hopelessness of his enemies. — Pusey.]

Ver. 7. *Are ye not as the sons of the Cushites*, etc. Woe to him who considers what God through grace has made of him, as his own merit, and therefore boasts! God will be ashamed of him, and humble him under those over whom he exalts himself.

Ver. 8. *The eyes of the Lord*, etc. Nothing escapes the eyes of God; even though the contrary may often seem to be the case, yet in the end it is proven that He has seen all, and in his own time administers chastisement. Whole kingdoms as well as individuals are objects of God's attention for joy or for sorrow. Why does many a kingdom meet a frightful end? The eyes of the Lord were upon it and upon its sins, and though men were not conscious of it, finally the fact became manifest.

Vers. 8, 9. *I will not utterly destroy*, etc. That we do not utterly perish is due only to the goodness of God, which has no end. Who has reason to fear the divine judgments? Not those who are like wheat, but those who resemble chaff. Hence the grave question to each one; whom do you resemble? Although it often seems as if even the wheat fell to the ground, yet in the end it is shown to be otherwise. Much seems to be wheat, and is not. In the sifting power of God's judgments lies their chief significance.

Ver. 10. *Who say, The evil shall not*, etc. [In both destructions of Jerusalem, the people perished the more miserably being buoyed up by the false confidence that they should not perish. So too now, none are so likely to perish forever as they who say, The evil shall not overtake us. "I will repent hereafter." "There is time enough yet." "God will forgive the errors of youth, the heat of passion." "God is merciful." Thus Satan deludes thousands upon thousands to their destruction. — Pusey.

Ver. 11. As the prophet here declares that a redeemer would come and renew the whole state of the kingdom, we see that the faith of the fathers was ever fixed on Christ; for in the whole world it is He alone who has reconciled us to God. Nor could the fallen Church have been restored otherwise than under one head. If then at this day we desire to raise up our minds to God, Christ must immediately become a mediator between us; for when He is taken away, despair will overwhelm us. Our confidence will come to nothing unless it be founded on Christ alone. — Calvin. *The fallen hut*. Strange comment on human greatness, that the royal line was not to be employed in the salvation of the world until it was fallen! The royal palace had to become the hut of Nazareth, ere the Redeemer of the world could be born, whose glory and kingdom were not of this world, who came to take from us nothing but our nature that He might sanctify it, our misery that He might bear it for us. Yet flesh and blood could not foresee it ere it came, as flesh and blood could not believe it when He came. — Pusey.

Ver. 12. *That they may possess*, etc. No gifts of God end in the immediate object of his bounty and love. Israel was restored in order that they, the first objects of God's mercies, might win others to God, not Edom only, but all nations upon whom his name is called. — Pusey.

Ver. 13. The mountains and hills of Judæa, with their terraced sides clad with the vine, were a natural symbol of fruitfulness to the Jews; but they themselves could not think that natural fruitfulness was meant under this imagery. It would have been a hyperbole as to things of nature, but what in natural things is a hyperbole, is but a faint shadow of the joys and delights and glad fruitfulness of grace. — Id.

Ver. 14. *And they build cities*, etc. This needs no exposition, since throughout the world, amid the desert of Heathendom, which was before deserted by God, churches of Christ have arisen which for firmness of faith may be called *cities*, and for gladness of hope, *vineyards*, and for sweetness of charity, *gardens;* wherein they dwell who have builded them through the Word, whence they drink the wine of gladness who formed them by precepts, whence they eat fruits who advanced them by counsels. — Rupertus.

Ver. 15. It is a promise of perpetuity like that of our Lord, Lo, I am with you alway, etc. As Jerome says, the Church may be shaken by persecutions, she cannot be uprooted; she may be tempted, she cannot be overcome. For the Lord God Almighty hath promised that He will do it, whose promise is the law to nature. — Pusey.]

Often in our time the Church of Christ seems like to David's fallen hut, but only when we look at its outward condition and the many who shun it; so far as regards the power which goes out from Christ and the blessing which He procures, it is not a fallen but a restored hut. For his blessings are not small. Happy are all who believe in Him. But a day is coming when the Church shall triumph in the face of the world, and stand forth great and noble outwardly as well as inwardly.

"Amen, Lord, all thy Word is true!
Amen, Lord, come, complete it all!"

THE

BOOK OF OBADIAH.

EXPOUNDED

BY

PAUL KLEINERT,

PASTOR AT ST. GERTRAUD, AND PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, WITH ADDITIONS,

BY

GEORGE R. BLISS, D. D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY AT LEWISBURG, PENN.

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OBADIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

Of the *author* of the brief prophecy concerning the doom of Edom, which those who arranged the Canon have inserted between Amos and Jonah, we really know, with certainty, nothing except the name. This is read by the Masorah as Obadiah [עֹבַדְיָה], *i. e.*, Servant of Jehovah, a proper name frequently met with, and which was borne also by a respectable Zebulonite of the time of Saul (1 Chr. xxvii. 19), a major-domo of Ahab (1 K. xviii. 3), a Levite under Josiah (2 Chr. xxxiv. 12), and several heads of post-exilian houses. There is, therefore, no ground for holding it, with Augusti and Küper, as a symbolic pseudonym. That, however, the pronunciation of the name offered by the Masoretes was not universal in the earliest times, is evident from the fact that the LXX. give for it, in different places, not only Obdias, but Abdias, Audias, etc.[1] What Jewish traditions report concerning the man bears the stamp of conjecture, or of fanciful invention. The oldest of these traditions identifies him with the chief courtier of Ahab, referred to above, probably because he is mentioned 1 K. xviii. 3 as a very pious man, but in so doing overlooks the fact that our prophecy grows not out of the circumstances of the ten tribes, but entirely out of Jerusalem. The others are still more capricious.

To determine the *time* of the prophecy, we are left, therefore, simply to its *contents*, to its relations with the other prophets, and to the historical accounts of the Old Testament.

The situation in which the prophet stands is shown principally in ver. 10 ff., since vers. 1-9 contain mere prophecy ("in that day," ver. 8). Jerusalem is distressed by a hostile invasion, strangers have entered into her gates (ver. 11 c), have plundered and ravaged, so that the population have betaken themselves to a wild flight (ver. 14 b, c), have carried off many treasures (ver. 11 b), and divided the inhabitants among them by lot (ver. 11 d), to sell them as slaves to distant peoples (ver. 20 c). The Edomites have not only exhibited an unbrotherly and malignant delight in these transactions (vers. 12; 10 a; 13 b), but have actively taken part in them (ver. 11 e), have shared in the invasion of the city (ver. 13 a), in the plundering (ver. 13 c), and the mad revelry which followed (ver. 16 a), have lain in wait for the fugitives when they escaped from the city, and slain them in part, in part delivered them up to slavery (ver. 14). The catastrophe which the prophet threatens in vers. 1–9, is the punishment of Edom for these deeds (ver. 10), and with this is linked the restitution of Israel (vers. 17–21).

From this description it is obvious that the circumstances were such as presented themselves after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. That the conduct of Edom in relation to that catastrophe was thoroughly hostile, and closely similar to what is here depicted (ver. 11 ff.), is proved by the prophecies occasioned by that conduct (Ezek. xxxv. and Is. lxiii.). We might, therefore, regard the prophet as a contemporary of this event (Aben Ezra, Luther, Calovius, Tarnovius, Ch. V. and J. D. Michaelis, De Wette, Knobel, Maurer, Winer, Hendewerk[2]), or as one of the later Epigoni of prophecy (Hitzig, an Egyptian Jew, cir. 312 B. C.). And undoubtedly we must prefer this reference of our prophecy to every other, if it were true, as Hitzig maintains, that in the first ten verses of his discourse, Obadiah makes use of, nay, simply paraphrases the strikingly similar language of Jeremiah (chap. xlix. 7 ff.) against Edom. It is easy, in this view, to regard precisely those peculiar features in which Obadiah excels Jeremiah (ver. 11 ff.), as called forth by the immediate impression of the catastrophe, which Jeremiah had not yet before his eyes: for he

[1] ['Αβδία, [Οβδία]. Αβδεια, Αβαδία. —Tr.] [2] [Cowles —Tr.]

spoke his prophecy in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and therefore before the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. Caspari, p. 15 ff.).

Nevertheless, concerning this use of Jeremiah by Obadiah, precisely the contrary is to be believed. Against it speaks at once the circumstance, that this very series of announcements in Jeremiah concerning foreign lands to which the passage xlix. 7 ff. belongs, shows not merely a constant use of earlier prophecies, but that Jeremiah repeatedly applies earlier prophecies, with free reproduction and expansion, to present occasions. So the prophecy against Moab, Is. xv., xvi., in chap. xlviii.; the prophecies in Am. i. 13 ff., viii. ff., in chap. xlix. 1 ff., 23 ff. Thus he has, in some sense out of his own ἐξουσία, on the principle that prophecy is spoken for all time and therefore must be applicable also to the ever-recurring present, compiled, in this series of chapters, a canon of ancient prophecy for his own time. And if, in all these passages, it is undeniable that Jeremiah has availed himself of older prophecies should he in just the one before us be the original, and Obadiah have borrowed from him?

This presumption against Hitzig's view rises to certainty when we more carefully compare the two predictions. "On comparing the two common sections with each other, we find that in Obadiah partly shorter and more rapid, partly heavier and more abrupt, partly more clear and lively than in Jeremiah" (Caspari). It cannot be denied that the *cruces interpretum* offered by Obadiah, especially in vers. 3, 5, appear in Jeremiah smoothed down, and that the solitary difficulty which Jeremiah has beyond Obadiah in the word תִּפְלַצְתְּךָ (chap. xlix. 16), as against the numerous obscurities peculiar to the latter, is of no account. But it is contrary to all hermeneutical procedure to suppose that a later writer, in regard to a situation meanwhile explained, should have still darkened the clear language of the earlier one, while, on the contrary, it is a common and explainable occurrence, that the obscure prophecy of antiquity should, in the hands of the subsequent seer, who is at the same time highly skilled in discourse, become more flowing and more clear. Some, to escape this argument, feign that the obscurities of Obadiah are indications of an atomistic compilation, from a point of view arbitrarily chosen, without force and without definiteness; but the exegesis of the book will have to show that his discourse is one which bears a single burden, is animated by one independent soul.

The comparison with Jeremiah is, therefore, of no value toward the more accurate determination of the age of our prophet. On the other hand, we have the positive circumstance that the inner relationship places his prophecy entirely within the circle of view of those prophets among whom the collectors of the Canon have placed it, that is, the oldest. Of the great monarchies of the world Obadiah knows nothing. The enemies who have invaded Jerusalem are to him simply foreigners and strangers (ver. 11), and besides the Edomites he names none except the Philistines (ver. 19), and the Phœnicians (ver. 20), both of whom appear in Joel (iv. 4), as enemies of the kingdom. Aram is not so much as once mentioned, so that his horizon is still narrower than that of Amos. The two kingdoms are in existence standing firmly side by side. The southern one consists of the tribes of Judah (which inhabits the Negeb and the lowland) and Benjamin (ver. 19); the northern (Ephraim and Gilead) must yet be possessed, that a united kingdom may arise, one army of the children of Israel (vers. 19, 20, cf. Hos. ii. 2). The captives of Jerusalem are not carried away to the east, but are sold as slaves into the west, precisely as in Joel; to the Javan (Ionia) of Joel corresponds the Sepharad (Sparta) of Obadiah (ver. 20). The middlemen, who have made traffic of these slaves, are doubtless the same as those named in Am. i. 9; Joel iv. 6, the Phœnicians, whom Obadiah also (ver. 20) expressly mentions. Of a destruction of Jerusalem, moreover, not a word is said, but only of capture and ravage. And it is to be observed that the hostile attitude of Edom is by no means a state of things first produced by the Babylonian destruction, and before unheard of. In Joel also (iv. 19), and Amos (i. 11 ff.; ix. 12), precisely as here, Edom appears as an enemy of Judah, deserving double chastisement on account of his originally fraternal relation to Israel. It would be plainly incongruous to refer all these predictions just cited, and which, for the most part, wear a very distinctly historical aspect, to the incidental position which Edom occupied two centuries later in the Chaldæan catastrophe; the more incongruous because, from the time of Moses onward (Num. xx. 14 ff.), the attitude of this neighbor nation toward Israel was, according to the historical Books also, hostile up to the full measure of their strength (1 Sam. xiv. 47; 2 Sam. viii. 14; 1 K. xi. 14 ff.; 2 K. viii. 20, etc.).

The same is to be said of Obadiah also. As he belongs to the first period of written

prophecy, not only from the correspondences above noticed, but also from the fact that the later prophets presuppose him as having gone before (cf. under the head of Theological and Ethical), nay, even expressly quote him (Joel iii. 5; ii. 32, cf. Obad. 17), he cannot have had the Chaldæan destruction for his point of view, for what he says of devastation is not prophecy, but palpable, detailed description, which is plainly distinguished from the prophetic verses, and therefore relates to the past. And even if we give up the hermeneutical rule that every prophetic utterance must rise from a given historical situation, be called forth by some manifestation of God's rule in the history of the kingdom; if we concede that, irrespective of any historical occasion, and purely by the force of inspiration, Joel may have foreseen the participation of the Edomites in the destruction of Jerusalem, with all its particular features; still, it is certainly inconceivable that he should have placed this incidental circumstance so conspicuously in the foreground, while the main fact which should have naturally cast down him and his people to the ground, in the prospect of it, namely, the destruction itself, and the chief enemy, the Babylonians, were treated as such obviously familiar circumstances, mere scenery and a starting point for the threatening against Edom. Thus fall also the opinions which place Obadiah in the early times indeed (under Uzziah), but still will not give up the reference of his prophecy to the catastrophe of 588 B. C. (Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Caspari.) The event which by its iniquity has called for the judgment announced by Obadiah is, rather, one contemporary with himself, one, therefore, accomplished in the earlier times by the Edomites against Jerusalem, which he has personally witnessed, and on which the other prophets of that age also look back in the apposite passages of their writings.

When we inquire more specifically into the nature of this transaction, it is not that recorded in 2 Chr. xxv. 23 f. (Vitringa, Carpzov, Küper), nor in 2 Chr. xxviii. 5 ff. (Jäger). In both of these instances it was not foreigners who desolated Jerusalem, as Obadiah assumes to have been the case (ver. 11), but principally the Ephraimites. It is rather the capture of Jerusalem under Joram, mentioned 2 Chr. xxi. 16 f., cf. 2 K. viii. 20 ff. (Hoffmann, Delitzsch, Nägelsbach). Here we are told that the Philistines and Arabians (a collective name with the later historical writers, for the peoples living east and south of Judah), came up and carried away great treasures, and even took among the captives the princes of the royal family. This event, which harmonizes far better than the Chaldæan invasion with our prophecy, inasmuch as it, like Obadiah, intimates nothing of a destruction of Jerusalem and annihilation of the national existence, but only plunder and rapine, this event alone can have been in the thoughts of Joel and Amos when they reproach the Philistines (Joel, iii. [iv.] 6; Am. i. 6 ff.) with having delivered over the captives of Judah and sold them into a foreign land. On account of this transaction the Edomites are, in the view of these prophets also, national foes.

If now, on the one hand, Obadiah coincides with them, especially with Joel, precisely in these connections, in several passages (vers. 10, 11, 15, cf. Joel iii. [iv.] 19, 3, 7, 14), and that not at all as a borrower, but as leading the way (ver. 17, cf. Joel ii. 32; iii. 5), and, on the other, Joel is to be regarded as a contemporary of Joash (877 ff.), we may, without danger of essential mistake, ascribe our prophecy to the preceding decade (890–880), falling mostly under the reign of Joram.[1] That his position in the Canon is subsequent to that of the later Joel affords no argument against this. In fact we are obliged, from the start, by Hosea's leading place in the series, to abandon the untenable hypothesis that an accurately observed chronological principle can be discovered in the succession of the minor prophets; and the exact adaptation of our prophet to Amos, ch. ix. 12, gave sufficient occasion (as Schnurrer had already perceived), for assigning to him just this place.

From this settlement of the date a beautiful and self-consistent *structure* of the prophecy offers itself. According to the peculiar custom of the prophets to begin with the threatening (or the consolation), and afterwards adduce the explanation of it, the discourse before us falls, first, into the announcement of the judgment (vers. 1–9), and the reasons for it (vers. 10–16); to which then the conclusion demanded by the nature of prophecy, the announcement of salvation to Israel, is appended. The language is the same throughout, and the plan rounded and complete. Thus the suppositions of Ewald and Graf (Jeremiah) fall to the ground. According to them vers. 1–9 should be regarded as the old prophetic kernel which a prophet of the exile has rewrought, completed, and adapted to the destruction of Jerusalem.

1 In harmony with this conclusion, we may venture the conjecture, that our prophet is identical with that pious Obadiah whom, with others, Joram's father Jehoshaphat had sent out to revive the spirit of true worship in the land, by the explanation of the law (2 Chr. xvii. 7).

LUTHER: Obadiah gives no sign of the time in which he lived, but his prophecy relates to the time of the captivity, for he comforts the people of Israel with the promise that they shall come again to Zion. Especially does his prophecy issue against Edom and Esau, who cherished a special, everlasting envy against the people of Israel and Judah, as is wont to be the case when friends fall out with each other, and especially when brothers come into hatred and hostility toward each other; there the hostility knows no bounds. Therefore were the Edomites beyond all bounds hostile to the people of Judah, and had no greater joy than to look on the captivity of the Jews, and gloried over them, and mocked them in their grief and misery. How the prophets almost all upbraid the Edomites for such hateful malice, see on Psalms, cxxxvii. 7. Now since such conduct is exceedingly distressing when one, instead of comforting as one reasonably should, rather mocks the sorrowful and afflicted in their grief, laughs at them, scorns them, glories over them, so that their faith in God suffers a powerful assault, and is strongly tempted to doubt and unbelief, God sets up a special prophet against such vexatious mockers and assailants, and comforts the afflicted, and strengthens their faith with threatening and rebuke against such hostile Edomites, and with promises and assurance of future help and deliverance. That is truly a needed comfort and a profitable Obadiah. At the close he prophecies of Christ's kingdom, which shall be not in Jerusalem only but everywhere. For he mingles all peoples together, as Ephraim, Benjamin, Gilead, Philistines, Canaanites, Zarpath, which cannot be understood of the earthly kingdom of Israel, since such people and tribes must be separated in the land, according to the law of Moses. But that the Jews make Zarpath mean France, and Sepharad Spain, I let pass and hold nothing of it; yet let every one hold what he will.

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OBADIAH.

THE PROPHECY.

1 VISION OF OBADIAH:
Thus saith the Lord Jehovah concerning Edom;[1]
We have heard tidings from Jehovah,
And[2] an ambassador is sent forth among the nations.[3]
Arise ye,[4] and let us arise against her to battle!

2 Behold, I make thee small among the nations;
Despised art thou exceedingly.
3 The pride of thy heart hath deceived thee,
Dweller in the refuges of the cliff,
His lofty habitation;[5]
Who saith in his heart:
Who will bring me down to the earth?
4 Though high,[6] like the eagle,
And though among the stars thou set thy nest,
Thence will I bring thee down,
Whispers Jehovah.[7]

5 If thieves had come to thee,[8]
If robbers by night—
How art thou destroyed!
Would they not steal until they had enough?
If grape gatherers had come to thee,
Would they not leave gleanings?
6 How is Esau searched out![9]
His hidden things sought up!
7 To the border have sent[10] thee forth
All the men of thy covenant;
They have deceived thee, prevailed against thee,
The men that were at peace with thee;
Thy bread[11] have they placed as a snare under thee;
There is no understanding in him.[12]
8 Will not I, in that day,
Whispers Jehovah,
Destroy the wise out of Edom,
And understanding out of the mount of Esau?
9 And thy heroes shall be dismayed, O Teman,
That[13] every man may be cut off from the mount of Esau
By[14] slaughter.

10 For the violence toward thy brother Jacob,
Shame shall cover thee,
And thou shalt be cut off forever.
11 In the day when thou stoodest opposite,
In the day when strangers took captive his army,[15]

And foreigners entered his gates,
And over Jerusalem cast lots,
Thou also wast as one of them.
12 And [yet] thou shouldest not have looked on[16] the day of thy brother, on the day of his calamity;
And not have rejoiced over the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction;
And not have enlarged thy mouth in the day of distress.
13 Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people, in the day of their ruin;
Not have looked, thou also, on his misfortune, in the day of his destruction;
And not have laid hand on his army, in the day of his ruin.
14 And thou shouldest not have stood at the forks,
To cut off his fugitives;
And not have delivered up his remnant, in the day of distress.

15 For near is the day of Jehovah on all the nations;
As thou hast done will they do to thee;
Thy deed will return upon thy head.
16 For as ye have drunken on the mountain of my holiness,
All the nations shall drink continually,
And drink, and swallow down,
And be as though they had never been.[17]

17 And on mount Zion shall be deliverance, and it will be holiness;
And the house of Jacob will take their possessions.
18 And the house of Jacob shall be a fire,
And the house of Joseph a flame,
And the house of Esau for stubble;
And they will kindle upon them, and devour them,
And there will be none remaining to the house of Esau;
For Jehovah hath spoken it.
19 And the south country shall possess the mountain of Esau,
And the lowland the Philistines;
And they shall possess the field of Ephraim,
And the field of Samaria;
And Benjamin [shall possess] Gilead.
20 And the captivity of this army of the sons of Israel,
Who [are among the] Canaanites, as far as Zarepath,[18]
And the captivity of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad,
Shall possess the cities of the south.
21 And saviors shall go up on mount Zion,
To judge the mountain of Esau.
And the kingdom shall be Jehovah's.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1. — No decisive reason appears for so unusual a thing as separating this familiar phrase from the following context, and making it a supplementary title. True, it is superficially inconsistent that Jehovah should here be represented as saying that the prophet and people have heard from Jehovah. But this rhetorical difficulty is remedied by the obvious explanation that the meaning of the formula, "thus saith Jehovah," is, "moved by Jehovah, I say." So Maurer, Hitzig, and others. — Tr.]

[2 Ver. 1. — Our author takes וְ = "that" or "to wit;" Luther: *dass*. This may be so, cf. Ges. Lex., p. 268, 6, but not necessarily. The וְ may be = *et jam*. "We have heard tidings from Jehovah [that Edom is to be attacked], *and already* is an ambassador sent forth." By whom the messenger has been sent is left to our thought; probably by Jehovah. — Tr.]

[3 Ver. 1. — Strictly all the גּוֹיִם were heathen to the Jews, and whether the term carries with it a *special* sense of profaneness and barbarity is not always clear. Here there is no reason for supposing it. — Tr.]

[4 Ver. 1. — The language of the messenger to the nations. This seems better than to understand it as spoken by the prophet and his countrymen to each other. — Tr.]

[5 Ver. 3. — מְרוֹם שִׁבְתּוֹ, lit. "height of his habitation," in apposition with חַגְוֵי־סֶלַע, and dir. obj. of שֹׁכְנִי. The sudden change to the third person of the suf. expresses more strongly the prophet's scorn. — Tr.]

[6 Ver. 4. — שִׂים is dependent on תַּגְבִּיהַּ in the previous member, so that the latter serves the purpose of an adverb: "make high to place" = "place high," cf. יַגְבִּיהוּ עוּף Job v. 7, and Gesen. Gram. § 142, 4, Rem. 1. Each word may be thought as a complement to the other, in the respective clauses, adding קִנֶּךָ in the first. — Tr.]

[7 Ver. 4. — נְאֻם יי. To find an expression for this formula, which shall be rhetorically satisfactory, is not easy, and yet we are bound, in translation, to distinguish, if possible, between it and the nearly equivalent אָמַר יי; cf. Gesen. *Lex.* s. v. נְאֻם — Tr.]

[8 Vers. 5, 6. — Dr. Kleinert, as will be seen from the Exeg. notes, connects these verses in one expression, and translates substantially as follows: —

> Verily, not thieves have come to thee,
> Not robbers of the night;
> How art thou brought to nought!
> They steal only what they need.
> Not grape gatherers have come to thee:
> They leave still a gleaning.
> But how are they of Esau sought out
> His hid-treasures discovered!

De Wette and Maurer translate interrogatively the first, second, and fifth members above (with differences in other respects): "Have thieves — have grape gatherers," etc. As, however, the interrogative use of אִם, and still more its strongly affirmative use (apart from formulæ of swearing), are rare, and since both Maurer and Kleinert admit that the particle may be taken here in its usual (conditional) sense, as in the preceding verse, there seems to be no necessity of changing the expression with which we are familiar in the Eng. Vers. The fifth verse thus represents the condition of Edom as worse than that of a house, or a vineyard, that has been plundered; and the third clause is a parenthetical ejaculation extorted by the view of their wretchedness. Few commentators have perceived any necessity for connecting verses five and six in one stanza. — Tr.]

[9 Ver. 6. — נֶחְפְּשׂוּ. The Plur. shows simply that עֵשָׂו is used in the collective sense. — Tr.]

[10 Ver. 7. — שִׁלְּחוּךָ. Kleinert renders "escorted," *Absagegeleit gegeben*. — Tr.]

[11 Ver. 7. — The figurative mention of "bread" here has given the commentators much perplexity. We strongly incline to the expedient of Maurer, who would defer the Athnach, and connect לַחְמְךָ with the preceding, "the men of thy peace, of thy bread." Otherwise there seems about equal reason for making "bread" the subject of the following verb, as Eng. Vers. Gesen. and many: "thy bread," q. d. "they who ate thy bread," "have placed," etc., and for making it the object of that verb, with Hendewerk, Kleinert, and others: "They have placed thy bread," q. d. "thy hospitality and confidence," "a snare under thee." Kleinert translates, "as thy bread they lay for thee a snare," which may mean, "as the reward for thy bread." — Tr.]

[12 Ver. 7. — Kleinert refers בּוֹ to the snare, and translates, "To which thou givest no heed." It is generally understood, more simply, as a sudden, perhaps contemptuous change of person from the second to the third. — Tr.]

[13 Ver. 9. — לְמַעַן. Kleinert is singular in translating "until." — Tr.]

[14 Ver. 9. — מִקֶּטֶל is connected with the following verse by most ancient versions, and the מִן here also rendered "for," "because of." Maurer, with considerable reason, so translates without changing the position, making מקטל the ground of the preceding threat. Dr. Pusey's comment is correct: "*By slaughter*, lit. *from slaughter*, may mean either the immediate or the distant cause of their being *cut off*, either the means which God employed, that Edom was cut off by one great slaughter by the enemy; or that which moved God to give them over to destruction, their own *slaughter of* their brethren the Jews." — Tr.]

[15 Ver. 11. — חֵילוֹ. Kleinert translates "treasures," which the word in itself may equally well bear; but as "army" seems quite suitable to the context, is probably referred to in ver. 20, and is here connected with a verb, שְׁבוֹת, which almost always means, strictly, "take captive," we adhere to the Eng. vers., with the majority. The same remark applies to the same word in ver. 13. — Tr.]

[16 Ver. 12. — Kleinert gives תֵּרֶא, here and in the next verse, by "feed upon," *sich weiden*, like Eng., "to feast one's eyes" on anything. Noyes translates, "look with delight." But this *interpretation*, if correct, may as naturally be suggested by the simple English equivalent "behold," or "look upon," as by the Hebrew. — Tr.]

[17 Ver. 13. — On חֵילוֹ cf. above note 15, on ver. 11. Kleinert renders תִּשְׁלַחְנָה "reach after." — Tr.]

[18 Ver. 16 — כְּלוֹא הָיוּ, Zunz, happily: *wie Niegewesene*, = καθὼς οἱ μὴ ὑπάρξαντες: "as those who never were. — Tr.]

[19 Ver. 20. — Kleinert, in this *locus vexatus*, makes אֲשֶׁר כ׳, and what follows, the subject, supplying the verb "be come," and גָּלֻת the predicate, he translates thus: "Captives of this army of the sons of Israel shall the Phoenicians become, as far as Sarepta;" lit. "what Phoenicians there are unto Sarepta." This keeps close to the Hebrew if it be permitted to supply the two verbs "to become" and "to be," neither of which is countenanced by the context. Neglecting this (which, besides, leaves us perplexed why Sarepta, in particular, should be the limit of the future conquests), we may either borrow the verb "possess" from the preceding sentences, or from that which follows, thus: "The captivity . . . . [shall possess] what [belongs to the] Canaanites unto S.," in which case the absence of אֵת to mark the obj., in this sentence *alone of the seven before and after*, is hard to explain; or we may, supplying, from בִּסְפָרַד in the parallel member, the prep. בְּ with כְּנַעֲנִים, make this whole clause a part of the subject of the following "possess," and translate as is done in the text; so Pusey. Maurer comes near it in the main sense.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

I. *The judgment upon Edom*, vers. 1–9. — Ver. 1. The title designates the chapter as a **Vision of Obadiah.** חזון is not merely a single vision (Is. xxix. 7), but the result of the views of the prophets (חזים, Mic. iii. 7; Is. xxix. 10), in the widest sense, embracing both species, the vision in the waking state, and the prophetic dream (Num. xii. 6); hence used elsewhere also in the inscriptions to prophetic records (Nah. i. 1), and even to entire collections of prophecies (Is. i. 1). The second title, **Thus saith the Lord Jehovah concerning Edom** (cf. [לְ "concerning"] Judg. ix. 54), which also stands unconnected with the following, is an emphatic epexegesis to the "vision."

The prophecy itself begins with the brief statement of what God has decreed: **A rumor have we** (*i. e.*, the people, not merely the prophet, as in Jer. xlix. 14) **heard from Jehovah,** therefore through the medium of prophecy (cf. Am. iii. 7; 2 K. vi. 12); **and a messenger is sent among the heathen nations** (the connection by "and" as often with *vv. sentiendi*, Zach. vi. 1): **Rise ye, and let us rise against her to battle.** Not only when God summons the heathen to the decisive contest with his people (Joel iv. 9), but also when they are obliged to perform his judgment against a people belonging even to their own circle, does this war-message which is sent forth among them proceed under his direction. They are even called in this case his sanctified ones (Is. xiii. 3), as Cyrus is named in such a mission the anointed of God (Is. xlv. 1). The reference of עָלֶיהָ to Jerusalem which, from Is. vii. 1, seems the more obvious, as the feminine construction of אדום nowhere else occurs, is expressly excluded by the quotation in Jer. xlix. 14. Verses 1 and 2 stand, accordingly, not in a relation of opposition, but of climax.

Not his people does Jehovah summon against Edom, but heathen nations. In this lies the miserableness of his fate, that he should (ver. 2) take among his associates the place of a despised and humbled enemy; **behold, I make thee small among the heathen** (הִנֵּה with the participle, the common form of apodeictic prediction): **despised art thou exceedingly.**

While this picture of humiliation appears vividly present to the eyes of the prophet, he gives to it the signature: **the pride of thy heart hath deceived thee.** Properly the emphasis lies on the verb; betrayed thee has, etc., but through the precedence given to the sin which has caused this the ethical element in this calamity, that it is incurred by guilt, is rendered prominent. Jer. xxxvii. 9. The pride of Edom rested on the notion of apparent unassailableness: **thou that dwellest** (Ges. § 90, 3 a.) **in the refuges** (after the Arab.; according to LXX., Vulg., Syr.: clefts) **of the cliff, his lofty habitation** (שֹׁכְנִי with the acc. מְרוֹם, as in Is. xxxiii. 5; מרום שבתו, like פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ, Is. ix. 5; Ew. § 287 g.). "The territory of Edom was a rocky mountain mass, full of caverns, and the Edomites dwelt, partly, in the natural caves there found (hence the earlier inhabitants of Mount Seir were called חורים, *i. e.*, troglodytes, cave-dwellers, Gen. xiv. 6; Deut. ii. 12, 22), partly in abodes artificially hewn out of the rock." Caspari. Jerome (on v. 6): "*Revera omnis australis regio Idumæorum de Eleutheropoli, usque ad Petram et Halam in specubus habitatiunculas habet.*" Pliny: "*Petra* (= סלע, the capital,) *fuit oppidum circumdatum montibus inaccessis.*" Compare, on the hardly approachable position, and the peculiar impression given by the sight of the city hewn out of the rock, also Rosenmüller, *Bibl Alterthumskunde*, iii. 76 ff.; and specially C. Ritter, *Erdkunde*, xiv. 1108 ff. [Robinson, Stevens]. **That sayest in thy heart: Who will bring me down to the earth?** *i. e.*, no man can do it. And yet there is one who can.

Ver. 4. **Though high like the eagle, and though between the stars thou set thy nest** (שִׂים is an infin. dependent on הגביה, and הגביה שׂ ם, "to place high," like הצנע לכת "to walk humbly," Ew. § 280 c.), **from thence will I bring thee down, saith Jehovah.** The hyperbole of the first member of the verse, and the threatening of the second, became, from this time on, standing formulas to express human pride and divine retribution (Am. ix. 2 f.; Is. xiv. 13 ff.).

Since the humiliation of Edom is decreed by God, it will exceed all the experience of men, and all analogy with their proceedings. — Vers. 5, 6. **Verily, not thieves have come to thee, not robbers of the night; — how art thou brought to nought! They steal only so much as they need**; while thieves leave undisturbed that which is of no value to them, Edom is utterly destroyed. **Not grape-gatherers have come to thee, they leave gleanings; but how are those of Esau searched out! his hid treasures discovered!** We follow, in the main, the view of Chr. V. Michaelis, Jäger, Ewald, Caspari, who (in opposition to Kimchi, Marck, Rosenmüller, Hendewerk, De Wette, Maurer, Umbreit, Hitzig,) recognize an ascending contrast between the sentences beginning with אִם, and those with אֵיךְ. But this cannot fully appear if we retain the conditional sense of אִם. It is to be regarded as a strengthening particle of negation (Ew. § 356 a.; [Ges. *Lex.* s. v. C. 1, c. Cf. Fürst]). Our translation notices also that the rhetorical questions with הֲלוֹא stand in an affirmative sense. (Literally, we should have to translate: If thieves had come to thee, would they not have taken what they need? etc.[1]) The ruin of Edom is too complete to be ascribed to human causality, to the depredation of robbers, to an overthrow as if reapers had come over the harvest; it is God's pitiless work.

But truly God has, as ver. 1 already indicated, judged with divine irony; the heathen, Edom's own allies, have become his instrument: those who were bound (Gen. xxv. 24) to render aid have forsaken the unhappy people, deceived, betrayed them.

Ver. 7. **To the border have they escorted thee, all thy confederates.** "*Quos de petendo contra hostem auxilio legatos mittes, socii recusabunt admittere, suisque finibus excedere jubebunt, metu hostium tuorum, quos lacessere verebuntur.*" (Schnurrer.) "*Mos antiquus, qui etiam nunc obtinet, ut principes honoris causa deduci curent legatos, cum discedent ad limites ditionis suæ.*" (Drusius.) So Edom himself (Is. xvi. 1, 2) thrusts out from his capital, Sela, the Moabites who have sought refuge there, with their cattle, into the wilderness, and

1 [Cf. the Textual and Grammatical note on ver. 5. — Tr.]

bids them seek protection in Judah. **They have deceived thee, prevailed against thee, the men who were at peace with thee; thy bread have they placed as a snare under thee**; although pledged by their alliance to hospitality, they press thee with hostile treachery (cf. on the comparison with bread, Hupfeld on Psalm lx. 5); **thou considerest it not.** The בּוֹ is to be referred, with Hitzig (similarly Luther), to the snare.

Prudence is wanting, for, ver. 8, **Will not I in that day, — it is the word of Jehovah, — destroy the wise out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?** It is God's way to change the wisdom which is estranged from Him into its opposite (Is. xix. 11; xxix. 14; Jer. xlix. 7). — For the first time in prophecy we here meet with the solemn הַיּוֹם הַהוּא, the designation of the judgment day; here, it is true, only in a germinal form, so to speak, in finite relations, and without the eschatological addition, which accrues first in the later prophetical development.

Ver. 9. And as the wise become fools, so the heroes dispirited; **And dismayed shall be thy heroes, O Teman.** Teman, according to Jerome, in the *Onomast.*, and on Am. i. 12, was a special, and that the southern, part of Edom, which here, according to poetical usage, could the better stand for the whole land, since the association of ideas in ver 8 would lead precisely to the Temanites celebrated for their wisdom (Jer. xlix. 7). **Until** (לְמַעַן, like ἵνα, in the N. T., stands not always in a purely final sense, but introduces a result which necessarily follows from the *inward* nature of a thing,[1] Hos. viii. 4; Am. ii. 7; Ps. li. 6 [4]), **every man is** [that every man may be] **cut off from the mountain of Esau, by slaughter.** מִן of the efficient cause, as in Gen. ix. 14 [Gesen. *Lex.* p. 582 d.]. With the impressive phrase, "by slaughter" closes the delineation of the threatened judgment: vers. 8 and 9 complete the denunciation proper, for which the opening formula, "Thus saith Jehovah" (ver. 1), has prepared us, and which has hung suspended through all the intervening discourse. Then follows —

II. Vers. 10–16. *The statement of the reasons why* God will and must execute this terrible judgment. A logically argumentative discourse would have inferred from the present, in connection with the interior laws of divine providence, the tragical future of Esau; prophecy sees the future first, and from that descends, in explanation, to the roots which this future has in the events of the present. **For the violence** (מִן, as in Is. liii. 5,) **toward thy brother Jacob** (gen. obj., as in Joel iv. [iii.] 19). In spite of the old family feud, the consciousness of relationship between Edom and Israel had never been extinguished, and was sanctified by the law (Deut. xxiii. 7 f.). **Shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever.** The word כָּרַת is designedly chosen; it denotes the extermination demanded by God's will and law (Lev. xxii. 3). "Vers. 9 b and 10 c are limited by 2 c to this sense, that a few Edomites shall yet (perhaps those who have beforehand avoided the contest by flight; for all those present at the time of the contest shall, according to 9 b and 18, fall without exception) remain and constitute the extremely enfeebled people. The הכרת is therefore a destruction of them as a people, or rather, according to ver. 2 a as a numerous, strong people; cf. Is. vii. 8; Jer. xlviii. 42, 47." Caspari.

Ver. 11. In what did that iniquity consist? **In the day when thou stoodest opposite,** *sc.* against thy brother; the suff. in חֵילוֹ is anticipated as the object; **in the day when foreigners carried away his treasures** (Is. x. 14; 2 Chr. xxi. 17), **and strangers entered his gates** (Joel iv. [iii.] (17), **and cast lots over Jerusalem,** *i. e.*, over the population, whom they distributed among them by lot, to sell into slavery (Joel iv. [iii.] 3), **thou also wast as one of them.**

In a series of particular charges (ver. 12 ff.), the hostile disposition of Edom is depicted. The imperfect stands in these complaints for that which, in the mind of the prophet, ought in the past to have been done or avoided (Ew. § 136 g; cf. Job x. 18; Gen. xx. 9). Hitzig supposes that in such connection the unabbreviated imperf. must have stood; but in the examples cited by him, the cohortative (prohibitive) turn of the thought is wanting, which is here so plainly manifest. By this turn also the אַל is justified, which Caspari urges against our view. In Gen. xx. 9, לֹא must stand instead of אַל, because there a transgression of a law sanctified by custom and hereditary derivation is spoken of.

[There is room for doubt about the propriety of translating אַל־תֵּרֶא, and the other futures preceded by אַל, in this and the two following verses, as in the pluperfect subjunctive. Dr. Pusey, who strenuously maintains that the prophecy, although delivered soon after the time of Joel and Amos, contemplates directly the Chaldæan catastrophe, denies that these phrases can be so translated. "It is absolutely certain," he says, "that *al* with the future forbids or deprecates a thing future. In all the passages in which *al* occurs in the Hebrew Bible it signifies 'do not.' We might as well say that 'do not steal' means 'thou shouldest not have stolen,' as say that *veal tēreh and do not look* means 'thou shouldest not have looked.' . . . . We must not, on any principle of interpretation, in a single instance, ascribe to a common idiom a meaning which it has not, because the meaning which it has does not suit us." *Minor Prophets*, p. 228. He accordingly translates: "And look not on the day of thy brother," etc., as though the prophet were simply dehorting the Edomites, near two hundred years in advance, from cruelty to their brethren, the Jews, at the destruction of their city by Nebuchadnezzar! Maurer translates to the same purport: "*Ne spectes*," etc., but for an opposite reason. He supposes the prophet to be speaking at a time subsequent to the destruction of the city, to prohibit further outrages, which were likely to be continued and repeated, long after the main calamity. Zunz also renders in the same sense: "Thou shouldest not (again) feast thy eyes," etc. (*Aber du sollst dich nicht (wieder) weiden*, etc.). Kleinert, while justifying, in the exegetical notes, the view expressed in the Eng. Vers., adopts a rendering midway between that and Dr. Pusey's: "Thou shouldest not" (apparently as a general deprecation) "feast upon the day," etc. This is probably very near the grammatical sense, yet does not seem to give the true spirit of the passage so well as the version with which we are familiar. And, grammatically, although אַל, with the fut., every-

1 Cf. Textual and Grammatical on ver. 9.

where else meant deprecation of what was in prospect, still it can hardly be denied that, whatever was the prophet's actual relation to the outrages which he forbids, he *views* them in ver. 11 c, and in ver. 15 b, as already past; and what is the *spirit* of deprecation of anything thought of as past but a declaration that it ought not to have been done. "Thou shouldest not do (or do not) what thou hast done," is in effect, "thou shouldst not have done it."—Tr.]

Ver. 12. **And yet thou shouldest not feast thy eyes** (ראה with ב, behold with pleasure) **on the day** (*i. e.*, evil day, Job xviii. 20) **of thy brother,** even because the sufferer was thy brother; **on the day of his calamity** [נכרו], of his fate, strange and proceeding from the estrangement of God (Is. xxviii. 21); **and shouldest not rejoice over the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction, and shouldest not make great thy mouth,** to utter mockeries (Job xix. 5), **in the day of distress;** (ver. 13) **shouldest not enter into the door of my people in the day of their destruction; shouldest not feast thy eyes, even thou, on his misfortune in the day of his destruction; and shouldest not reach** (properly, stretch out the hand; יד is omitted, as in Ps. xviii. 12; 2 Sam. vi. 6;) **after his treasures, in the day of his destruction.**—The form תִּשְׁלַחְנָה, a much ventilated *crux interpretum*, is as Ew. pp. 435, 537 f. rightly remarks, not to be regarded as a 3d fem., according to Judg. v. 26; Is. xxvii. 11; xxviii. 3; and he has also rightly given up the punctation—*chunnah* previously proposed by him, after the Arab. *modus energicus.* We find the ending, נָה, as a cohortative strengthening appended to the imperat. sing. also (Is. xxxii. 9), where the daughters of Jerusalem, as representing the whole people, are addressed in the singular. Whether the נָה, as in אָנָּה, 2 Kings xx. 3 (=נָּה—אָה), is identical with the cohort. נָא, which can also follow the verb with negative applications (Judg. xix. 23), or whether it is a He paragogicum strengthened by the nasal (in the 2d pers., also Job xi. 17), must remain unsettled. Aben Ezra (cf. Drusius, Hitzig) holds an omitted יָדֶיךָ to be the subj., and the form a 3d pers. plur. used reflexively; both equally improbable. Not less so Caspari's recourse to the Arab. ending *na*, of the 2d pers. sing. fut.; Olsh., § 226 c, cuts the knot, and reads תשלח יד.

Ver. 14. **And thou shouldest not stand at the fork** of the road, where, close by the gate, the ways part, which the fleeing Jews would take, **to cut off his fugitives; and shouldest not deliver** (others: "shut in," but cf. Deut. xxiii. 16) **those that remained of his in the day of distress.** "*Hoc gravissimum est et summam malevolentiam arguit, miseros ac aerumnosos homunciones, qui fuga vitam servare quærunt, prodere et hostibus ad necandum tradere.*" Rosenm., cf. Am. i. 9. Therefore can the retribution for the failure of fraternal duty not be withheld, and the manner of its accomplishment will be according to the divine *jus talionis* (Ps. xviii. 20 ff.).

Vers. 15, 16. **For near is the day of Jehovah,** which always follows the day of the sinner (cf. Joel iv. with ch. i. ff.), **upon all the nations.** Already now the announcement of the day of God, which in ver. 8 has entered into the prophecy, extends its compass to that of a universal judgment. **As thou hast done, will they do to thee; thy deed will return upon thy head;** the deed which goes against God falls back again upon the doer, as an arrow, shot perpendicularly upward, on the head of the archer (Geier on Ps. vii. 17).

Ver. 16. **For as ye have drunk** (taken part in the wild revelry of the destroyers (Joel iv. 3)) on **the mountain of my holiness,** which I have made my holy possession (Ps. lxxiv. 2; ii. 6), and the desecration of which I must accordingly avenge, **so shall all the nations**—the discourse applies now, as the plural שְׁתִיתֶם has already indicated an extension of the field of vision, to all the enemies of God, including those who have served the special purpose of chastisement to Edom (ver. 1)—**drink,** namely, the cup of wrath and trembling from the hand of God, which He will, in the final judgment, extend to them before the walls of Jerusalem (Zech. xii. 2; Is. xix. 17; xxix. 9 f.; li. 17, 22; Ps. lx. 4; lxxv. 9). Thus also the Chald. paraphrase: As ye have rejoiced over the blow which has fallen on my holy mountain, all the peoples will drink the cup of punishment from me, **continually; yea, they shall drink and swallow down,** with full draught, "and that not because they desire it, for the drink is very bitter, but because they must." Casp. **And will be as if they had not been;** *καὶ ἔσονται καθὼς οὐχ ὑπάρχοντες.* LXX.; shall be completely destroyed. "*Cocceius illud* esse quasi non fuissent, *exponit per gentium conversiones, quæ specialius declarantur in aliis prophetiis, imprimis in Daniele et Apocalypsi* (*Num. xxiv.* 24). *Sed clarum est, in prioribus jam memorari gentium pœnam et specture hoc* quasi non fuissent *ad ipsam bibitionem tanquam ejus proprium effectum, non autem merum consequens.*" Marck.

III. Vers. 17–21. *Messianic Application: the final salvation of Israel.* Where in this storm-flood of the final judgment will the ark be? ver. 17. **But upon mount Zion will be deliverance** (Jer. xxv. 35; others: a company of rescued ones; Is. iv. 2), **and it shall be holy,** God's sanctuary, fenced about by God (Zech. ii. 9), as once Sinai (Ex. xix. 12 f.), unapproachable to the strangers (Joel iv. 17) who have profaned it (ver. 16), a sure place for those who belong to God (Joel iii. 5). **And the house of Jacob,** the Jews, those over whom the lot had been cast by their destroyers, **shall possess their possessions:** ירשׁ מורשׁ chosen for the play upon the name Jerusalem[1] = ירושׁ שלם, "peaceful possession." That this has no reference to the occupation of hostile territory (Jäger), the suff. plur. being referable to בית rather, and Moraschim the hereditary possessions of Israel, especially of Jerusalem, is shown by the whole syntax of the verse, and by the context.

Then when Israel sits unassailed in his land again, he will arise against his enemies for the divine judgment. Ver. 18. **And the house of Jacob,** *i. e.*, Judah who stands in the most directly hostile opposition to the unbrotherly Esau (cf. ver. 10 with 11), **will be a fire,** namely, through the burning zeal of God who is in him (Is. x. 17); **and the house of Joseph,** the now severed kingdom of the ten tribes (Zech. x. 6), whose head is the **Josephide**

1 [On the derivation and signification of the name Jerusalem, *vide* on Josh. x. 1, in this Commentary, and Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. Jerusalem.—Tr.]

Ephraim, aud which at the time of the deliverance **will have returned** to the unity of the government (Hos. ii. 2), **a flame; and the house of Esau stubble** (Is. v. 24), which, as the vital force has forsaken it, will blaze at the first touch of fire; **and they will kindle upon them and devour them, and there will be none left remaining to the house of Esau;** as it also did not spare even the escaped [ver. 14]. Contrast to the case of Judah, ver. 17. Whence all this? **For Jehovah hath spoken it** (ver. 1). The execution of the judgment will restore Israel to his former extent of territory.

Ver. 19. **And the south shall possess** — cf. LXX., *οἱ ἐν Ναγέβ*, the inhabitants of the Negeb, the southern portion of Judah, extending to Idumæa (Gen. xx. 1; Josh. x. 40; xv. 26) — **the mountain of Esau, and the inhabitants of the lowland,** which stretches in the west of Judah toward the Philistines (Josh. x. 40; xv. 33; Jer. xxxiii. 13), **the Philistines;** the people put for the land. Israel will thus not merely receive his *moraschim*, his hereditary lands (ver. 17), but also the adjacent country which belonged to him under David (cf. Ps. lx.). **And they,** the same to whom the south and the lowlands belong, the men of Judah, **will possess the field of Ephraim, and the field of Samaria;** so that, after the union of the tribes presupposed in 18 a, the dominion returns to Judah (Gen. xlix. 10), **and Benjamin will possess Gilead.** The whole land is brought back to the house of David by the two tribes which have remained true to it (Jer. xxxii. 44).

Ver. 20. And, to crown the triumph, **captives unto this army** (גלת and חל in the archaic style, without vowel letters, Olsh. § 39 d.) **of the sons of Israel,** the twelve tribes united under the leadership of Judah, **will become the Phœnicians which there are even to Zarephath** (Sarepta); the Phœnicians who have taken part in the shameful attempt of Edom against Jerusalem, by the sale of Jewish captives into slavery (hence called by the equivocal name כנענים, Joel iv. 6; Am. i. 9), will now themselves become prisoners, so that the whole district as far as Sarepta, to which point the word of prophecy was carried by Elijah (1 K. xvii. 9, 10), will be cleared of the heathen. **And the captivity of Jerusalem,** *i. e.*, the captives from Judah, **who are in Sepharad, will possess the cities of the south,** whose inhabitants meanwhile have seized the mountain of Esau (ver. 19). Sepharad is a region in the west which is mentioned also in the cuneiform inscriptions; by the ancients supposed to be Spain, but rather, perhaps, Sardis (Lassen, Hitzig), or Sparta (Delitzsch). The last supposition is favored by the fact that Joel names the Ionians, the Greeks in general, as the people to whom the Phœnicians have sold the captive Jews; as also on the cuneiform inscriptions at Bisutun, Sparad and Ionia are mentioned in immediate connection.[1] Among the translations hitherto proposed of this variously interpreted verse, two principally deserve notice; (1.) "The captives of this army of the sons of Israel (namely, those who are now 'carried away') shall possess what Canaanites there are unto Sarepta." Hitzig. But then את ought to stand before אשר. (2.) "The captives of this army who dwell among the Canaanites (or, are Canaanites) unto Sarepta, and the captives of Jerusalem," etc. Caspari, Umbreit. But כנענים without a verb cannot, like מסךְ, in Ps. cxx. 6, be an accus., and to take it as a predicate results in nonsense.[2]

Ver. 21. **And there will come up saviors,** not divine beings, for these would descend from above, but the heroes who, through the deeds spoken of in ver. 17 ff., have gained for the people their rights (cf. Micah v. 4, 5; Neh. ix. 27), **on mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau.** שׁפט is the usual expression for the dispensation of justice in the name of Jehovah; the judges are called interchangeably, שֹׁפְטִים and מוֹשִׁיעִים (Judg. iii. 9, 15; i. 16, 18). The accus. stands here not, as usually (Ps. xliii. 1), for that to which right is secured, but for that in which an example of justice is exhibited. **And the kingdom shall be Jehovah's.** Chald.: And the kingdom of Jehovah will be manifested over all the lands of the earth. Ps. xxii. 29; Is. xxiv. 23.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The judgment of the world presupposes the separation between God's congregation and the world, and is, as an objective crisis, the final consequence and manifestation of this inner discrimination already experienced (cf. John iii. 18 f.). The world-power is the necessary complement to the community of the saved. It is not given by an original antithesis to the kingdom of God, but has developed itself with the latter from the same natural ground, and at the first stood in a fraternal relation with it. Now, however, it stands in an independent isolation over against it; and, as lies in the very nature of the case, the original connection, like a sting cleaving to the conscience, has served only to increase the alienation. The opposition has in all points amounted to polarization: the kingdom of God in prostration, the world-power in secure defiance; the kingdom of God in humility, this in pride; this in possession on the earth, that without possessions on earth, but having a refuge in the heavenly Jerusalem; this only an object of the divine decrees, but that possessing the knowledge of these decrees through the information of the prophets. God's decree is the completion of his kingdom, and so the removal of its enemies. Hence the necessity for the judgment on the world which takes place in the legal form of the *talio*, the penalty exactly adequate to the crime: the punishment of the world-power corresponds to its sins, and its conduct towards the congregation of God. If the harmony in the order of the world is to be restored, a revolution of the existing most unreasonable relation must take place; the world-power is stripped of its possessions, the congregation acquires them, — that despised, this highly esteemed. This judgment is already indicated in the nature of sin; it executes itself so soon as God once allows it development to its final result, and his saviors on Zion establish what has been actually given. What is true they establish in continuance; what is naught, because it is against God, they cast into annihilation. In prophecy, this plurality of saviors, compared with the one Saviour, represents the same preliminary stage as is signified in the history by the previous period of the judges, compared with the monarchy.

Obadiah (comp. the Introd.) occupies chronologically the first place among the prophetic writers,

1 [See on this name, Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. — Tr.]

2 [See Textual and Grammatical on this verse. — Tr.]

and at once fits into the total organism of recorded prophecy. For in this we may distinguish, according to the relation between God and the world-power, four periods: that in which the world is represented by the *neighboring nations* (Obad., Joel, Amos); the *Assyrian* (Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum); the *Babylonian* (Habakkuk, Jer.); the *universal*, eschatological (Ezek., Hag., Zach., Daniel). In each of those stages the preceding is included anew, as Edom by Isaiah; and thus Assyria can appear still to Zachariah as representative of the world. Egypt goes from the patriarchal age through all the periods as type of the world, and in allusion to the primitive history (Gen. xi.) Babylon appears as such, in connection with Assyria, even in Isaiah's time. That in the first period, among the neighboring peoples, Edom, in particular, stands forth energetically in the foreground, has its reason (apart from the special historical occasions stated in the Introd.) in the entire scheme of the national history. Edom, as is manifest from the evidences before given, is exactly fitted, as the brother nation of Israel, to appear by preference as representing the attitude of the world toward the kingdom of God; and in the relation of the patriarchs Esau and Jacob is given the prototype of the historical development which ends in the remarkable situation where the Edomite, Herod, through his malicious mockery of the true Israel, Jesus, invokes the judgment on his own head and race.

It lies in the nature of the case, that the historico-dogmatical intimations in Obadiah were of fundamental importance for the later development. Leaving out of view numerous, perhaps accidental, allusions, we still find an extension of the ideas of Obadiah in Is. xxxiv. 63; Jer. xlix. 7 ff.; Ezek. xxv. 12 ff., 35, in all which passages the prophecy concerning Edom, reaching beyond the simple historical framework, gains more and more of an eschatological character, and Edom becomes a type of arrogant defiance against God. Hence the further coincidences: the judgment upon pride (Obad. 2, comp. with Is. ii. 12 ff.; xiv. 2 ff.); the impossibility of escape from God (Obad. 4, comp. with Am. ix. 2 ff.); the completeness of his judgment (Obad. 6 comp. with Micah vi. 14 ff.; Jer. xlii. 15 ff.); the destruction of wisdom out of a people which God judges (Obad. 8, comp. with Is. xix. 11 ff.; Jer. l. 36). The denunciation: for near is the day of Jehovah (ver. 15, in Joel i. 15; ii. 1; iv. 15; Is. xiii. 6; Zeph. i. 7; Ezek. xxx. 30). The accurately corresponding penalty (ver. 15 comp. with Jer. l. 15, 29; Joel. iv. 4, 7). The cup of trembling (ver. 16 from Ps. lx. 5 comp. with Is. li. 17 ff.; Jer. xxv. 26 ff.; Zach. xii. 2 ff.). The deliverance on Mount Zion (ver. 17, comp. with Joel iii. 5; iv. 17). Israel a consuming fire (ver. 18, comp. with Am. v. 6). The summons: for Jehovah hath spoken (ver 18, in Joel, Isaiah, and Micah, nine times).

Hofmann: All people shall succeed in capturing and misusing Zion, but they shall also be all made to taste the bitterness of their iniquity, and become drunk with their intoxicating wine.

Hengstenberg: The nature of Edom is hatred against the kingdom of God, whereby their calling upon the Lord and the Lord's calling them is excluded. The individual, however, can leave the community of his people, and so pass over into the domain of saving grace, as the example of Rahab shows. The prophet is to call out to the people of the covenant: θαρσεῖτε· ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον. The flagrant discrepancy between the idea, according to which the kingdom of God should be universal, and the reality, where it is thrust into a corner, will be even aggravated hereafter. From this corner also will the people of God be thrust. But death is the passage to life, the extremity of persecution is the precursor of redemption. The people of God shall not merely experience restoration; they shall possess the dominion of the world. For the ungodly heathen world, on the contrary, their exaltation is the precursor of destruction. The kingdom will be the Lord's, *i. e.*, his previously hidden dominion will now come plainly to light; voluntarily or by compulsion the people of the earth will acknowledge it.

Of the fulfillment: Hieronymus: The Assyrians and Babylonians have held subject everything as far as the Propontis, and to the Scythian and Ægean seas. If we read the historians of the Greeks and the barbarians, we shall say that this word of God (ver. 15) was fulfilled under the Assyrians and Babylonians.

Keil: The fulfillment of the ruin threatened to the Edomites began in the Chaldæan period. The devastation of Edom by the Chaldæans appears indisputably from Jer. xlix. 7 ff.; Ezek. xxxv. comp. with Jer. xxv. 9, 21; Mal. i. 3. The destruction of the Edomites as a people was prepared for through the Maccabees (1 Macc. v. 3, 65; Joseph., *Ant.*, xii. 18, 1; xiii 9, 1; xiii. 15, 4). Having thus already lost their national independence, they experienced their total ruin at the hands of the Romans. As regards the rest of our prophecy, Edom filled up the measure of his iniquity against Israel, the people of wonders, at the capture and destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldæans (Ezek. xxxv. 5, 10; Ps. cxxxvii. 7; Sam. iv. 22). But the fulfillment of the threatening Keil cannot find, with Caspari and others, in the subjugation of the Edomites through the Maccabees, and the destructive expeditions of Simon the Gerasene (Joseph. *De Bell. Jud.* iv. 9, 7). For the destruction of Edom and the occupation of Seir by Israel must, according to Numb. xxiv. 18, proceed from the Ruler that shall arise out of Jacob, the Messiah; according to Am. ix. 11 f., not until the setting up of the tabernacles of Judah that have fallen down, and according to Obadiah, on the day of Jehovah, at and after the judgment upon all peoples, will it follow. According to this view, the fulfillment of vers. 17–21 can belong only to the Messianic period, so that it began with the establishment of the kingdom of Christ on earth, proceeds with its extension among the peoples, and will be fully accomplished with its final completion at the second coming of our Lord.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

The judgment of the world.

Introduction: God has announced it through his servants the prophets (ver. 1).

I. It strikes the haughty ones who despise God (2 a, c) and trust, (*a.*) to fleshly supports, earthly reserves, which will not stand before God, but be destroyed utterly (vers. 2–6); (*b.*) to human helps which on account of the selfishness of sinners are converted into their opposite (ver. 7); (*c.*) to human wisdom which, as opposed to God, becomes folly (vers. 8, 9).

II. It is awarded because of the iniquity perpetrated against the people of God: (*a.*) of the malignant joy (ver. 12); (*b.*) of robbery and outrageous violence (ver. 15); (*c.*) of hatred so much the more fanatical as it was more causeless (ver.

14); (*d.*) of the stifling of conscience through intemperate appetites (ver. 16).

III. It ends with the salvation of the people of God: (*a.*) Holy Zion becomes the gathering point of the saved (ver. 17). (*b.*) On earth a fire is kindled in the hearts of the faithful, which burns over the whole earth (ver. 18). (*c.*) The meek will possess the kingdom of the earth (ver. 19). (*d.*) The inhabitants of the earth become the possession of God's people (ver. 20 a). (*e.*) On the whole earth the children of God are gathered to the congregation of God (ver. 20 b). (*f.*) Great gifts are bestowed on God's congregation for the guidance and deliverance of the congregation (ver. 21 a.). (*g.*) There comes to be one flock under one invisible Shepherd (ver. 21 b).

Ver. 1. The people of God have knowledge of his counsels, even concerning the heathen nations (cf. Am. iii. 3–8). Hence prophecy and the holy word embrace the whole world. — Ver. 2. The cause of the divine judgment is, from the beginning, the pride which sets itself against God (Gen. xi. 4, cf. x. 8–10). — Ver. 3. This has for its root the practical denial of God, the opinion that there is none above it (Ps. xii. 14). — Ver. 4. Sin is the severance of humanity; selfishness makes sinners the most hurtful enemies to each other. God needs only to let them do as they please, and they fulfill upon each other his judicial will. — Ver. 8. Wisdom, which sets itself against God, confounds itself; those who rage against Him, He makes blind (Gen. xix.). — Ver. 10. The judgment increases in severity, in proportion as the special sins against the congregation are more aggravated in their quality. Edom, as Jacob's brother, has greater guilt than other nations; Judaism has greater guilt through unbelief than the heathen, because Christ was born a Jew. — Ver. 11 ff. The judgment will tear away the veil from the deeds which man palliates to his own view, and show them in their bare nakedness. — Ver. 15. God's sentence individualizes: the special tendencies of the perverted life reach their respectively corresponding ends. For believers the judgment day is always near. — Ver. 16. The law rests on this: I am the Lord thy God; prophecy expands the view over the whole world. In face of the law, every one has to take heed to himself; in the judgment, the relations of the congregation to the whole world will become evident; it alone can be God's affair. Sin, in its extreme exaggeration, is itself judgment; his own sin becomes to the sinner, in its enjoyment, a loathing, and yet will hold him with inevitable fetters, to remain in it, till it destroys him. — Ver. 17. Zion, the place of deliverance; but only as a sanctuary, not for those who after carnal birth, but those only who through God's grace, have a claim to it. In them is (ver. 18) the flame which consumes everything finite; from Israel proceeds the judgment. Land and dominion of the true Israel must become his, because it is promised him. — Ver. 20. He who belongs to the house of God is in the world as a captive, and will return. (Is. xliii.). — Ver. 21. God's heroes are saviors, not destroyers. To Him belongs the kingdom always. No one may presume to become his visible substitute in the kingdom of God on earth.

Starke: The circumstances of Obadiah's country and family are designedly passed over, that we may not rest and depend on the outward respectability of men, but derive the authority of such prophecy, and the certainty of its issues, from God alone. Preachers must be, not in name alone, but also in fact, Obadiahs, *i. e.*, servants of God (1 Cor. iv. 1). No one should take to himself the power to teach in the church, unless he be called in an orderly manner. Although it may appear to human eyes that war arises out of accidental causes, God is at work therein. — Ver. 2. As authority and respect are a gift of God, so is contempt a singular punishment. — Ver. 5. Those who knowingly wage unjust wars are no whit better than thieves and murderers. — Ver. 6 ff. True friends have always been rare in the world. It commonly happens that God brings up those very ones with whom men have entered into alliance against his people, that they, out of God's just judgment, may be compelled to avenge the iniquity which has been committed against God's people. — Ver. 8 f. The children of the world are indeed wiser than the children of light, in their generation, but when they suppose they are wisest of all, God pours contempt on their endeavors. It is also a gift of God, when those who are at the head of land and people are brave and prudent. — Ver. 10. God is ill pleased when one rejoices in another's affliction; still more so when one heaps upon the suffering more trouble and sorrow. Men should not mock the miserable. — Ver. 11. An old, deep-rooted enmity is not easily allayed: *Nescit metam inveteratum odium* — Ver. 15. The retaliation which is administered by our dear God is a strong and comfortable evidence of his presence. — Ver. 16. The holy mountain is the Church of the true believers. To carouse upon this, is to pursue revelry in sinning against Christ's members. God's judgment begins at the house of God; *i. e.*, God seeks first his children with the cup of affliction; but the enemy must swallow the dregs, and be destroyed. — Ver. 18. The power of the holy gospel is like a fire, and God's word sweeps like flames, before which the stubble of hypocrisy and human ordinances cannot stand.

Pfaff: Ver. 6. No punishment comes alone when God attacks men with his might. In war many judgments come together, as the spirit of God here relates; murder, robbery, infidelity of friends, treachery, unwise and futile counsels, despondency of the soldiery, etc. — Ver. 15. The Lord's vengeance measures with the same measure; take heed that thou measure not with an evil measure.

Ch. B. Michaelis: Ver. 1. It is no empty report, but the most certain of all, for we have heard it from God. — Ver. 4. God makes possible what to men is impossible. — Ver. 15. God has, in punishment, as well as in kindness, his *horas et moras*.

F. Lambert: If any one thinks the book of Obadiah too small, let him, nevertheless, not despise it. Often, the less showy the vessel, the more precious the contents. — On v. 21. Now may ministers of God's word take notice who they are, and what they ought to do. It would be most appropriate for them to live and act conformably to their name ("*Savior*"), and that can take place only by pure, true preaching of the word of God with fear and trembling; for through that alone have we salvation in faith. Hence they should see well to it, that they add not their own petty, carnal inventions, lest they be found corruptors rather than saviors of the faithful. Would that the hour were come when, instead of destroyers, there should be nothing but saviors in all the world. For where such are received and supported, there is nothing but blessing. For they gather all the elect in the holy congregation, on

Zion, so that the dominion and all glory belongs to the Lord and his annointed.

Burk: On ver. 13. In an evil time every one robs, as he finds opportunity, and then throws the blame of it on the times.

Schlier: On ver. 10 ff. Judah had deeply fallen, and little good was to be found in him, and he richly deserved his chastisement. And yet God allows not haughtiness to have its way upon even a deeply fallen people; He causes them to be chastised, and sends nations as his scourge; yet when they exceed the proper bounds, and practice iniquity, He undertakes for his people; He remains faithful even amid the unfaithfulness of men, and visits Edom's wickedness upon him, even though Judah deserved the chastisement.

Rieger. — On ver. 2 ff.: How is he whom his heart has once deceived and seduced to haughtiness thus exposed to much other deceptions; for all the vanity with which he supports his high thoughts will betray him, and cannot save him against God, who resists the proud. — On ver. 17 ff. What has the Lord Jesus yet to accomplish in heaven before all will be brought back and restored, so as God has graciously predicted to his servants, the prophets! With great sorrow must one see the confusion which now appears on the earth, and how nothing but judgments seem to await us; but amid it all, the promise of his kingdom is our trust.

[Matt. Henry. — On ver. 2: Those that think well of themselves, are apt to fancy that others think well of them too; but when they come to make trial of them, they will find themselves mistaken, and thus their *pride* deceives them, and by it *slays* them. — Ver. 3, 4: Carnal security is a sin that most easily besets men in the day of their pomp, power, and prosperity; and does as much as anything both to ripen men for ruin and aggravate it when it comes. — Ver. 6: Treasures on earth, though ever so fast locked up, and ever so artfully hidden, cannot be so safely laid up but that thieves may break through and steal; it is therefore our wisdom to *lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven.* — Ver. 7: Those that make flesh their arm, arm it against them. Those show they have no understanding in them, who, when they are encouraged to trust in the Creator, put a cheat upon themselves by reposing a confidence in the creature. — Ver. 8: God will justly deny those understanding to keep out of the way of danger, that will not use their understanding to keep out of the way of sin. He that will be foolish, let him be foolish still. — A nation is then marked for ruin, when God hides the things that belong to its peace from the eyes of those that are intrusted with its counsels. *Quos Deus vult perdere, eos dementat:* God infatuates those He designs to destroy. — Ver. 9: The death or disuniting of the mighty often proves the death and destruction of the many; and it is in vain to depend upon mighty men for our protection, if we have not an almighty God for us, much less if we have an almighty God against us. — Ver. 11-14: In reflecting upon ourselves, it is good to compare what we *have done* with what we *should have done* — our practice with the rule, that we may discover wherein we have done amiss: have *done those things which we ought not to have done;* we *should not* have been where we were at such a time; *should not* have been in such and such company; should not have said what we said; nor have taken the liberty that we took. Sin thus looked upon in the glass of the commandment, will appear *exceedingly sinful.* — We must take heed with what eye we look upon the afflictions of our brethren; if we cannot look upon them with a gracious eye of sympathy and tenderness, it is better not to look upon them at all. — He that joins in with evil-doers, and is aiding and abetting in their evil deeds, shall be *reckoned,* and shall be *reckoned with,* as *one of them.* — Those do but impoverish themselves that think to enrich themselves by the ruin of the people of God; and those deceive themselves who think they may call all that substance their own which they can *lay their hands on* in the *day of calamity.*

Dr. Pusey. — On ver. 21: *And the kingdom shall be the Lord's.* Majestic, comprehensive simplicity of prophecy! All time and eternity, the struggle of time, and the rest of eternity are summed up in those three [Heb.] words. Zion and Edom retire from sight; both are comprehended in that one kingdom, and God is *all in all.* The strife is ended; not that ancient strife only between the evil and the good, the oppressor and the oppressed, the subduer and the subdued; but the whole strife and disobedience of the creature towards the Creator — man against his God. — Blessed, peaceful kingdom, even here in this valley of tears and of strife, where God rules the soul, freeing it from the tyranny of the world and Satan and its own passions, inspiring it to know Himself, the Highest Truth, and to love Him who is Love, and to adore Him who is Infinite Majesty! — Tr.]

THE

BOOK OF JONAH.

EXPOUNDED

BY

PAUL KLEINERT,

PASTOR AT ST. GERTRAUD, AND PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN.

TRANSLATED AND ENLARGED

BY

CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D.,

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE IN THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT CHICAGO, ILL.

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JONAH.

INTRODUCTION.

I. *Contents.*

THE prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai. receives a divine command to announce judgment against the great city, Nineveh, whose wickedness had come up before Jehovah. He attempts to evade the command by flight, and embarks in a ship to go to Tarshish. A storm rises on the sea. While the crew are praying, Jonah sleeps. But he is awakened; and the sailors perceiving in the fury [*Unbill*] of the storm a token of the divine wrath, cast lots, by which he is designated as the guilty person. On being interrogated by the crew, he acknowledges to them his guilt, and advises them to cast him into the sea, for the purpose of appeasing the divine anger. They put forth ineffectual efforts to escape from danger, without having recourse to this extreme measure, but finally follow his advice. (Chap. i.)

A large fish swallows Jonah. He thanks God that he is preserved in life; and is, on the third day, vomited out by the fish on the land. (Chap. ii.)

He now obeys the command of God, which comes to him the second time, and goes to proclaim to Nineveh, that within forty days, it shall be destroyed on account of its sins. But the Ninevites, with the king at their head, observe a great public fast,[1] and Jehovah determines to withdraw his threatening. (Chap. iii.)

Jonah having waited for the issue in a booth over against the city, must have felt that the effect [of the divine purpose to remit the calamity. — C. E.] would be to make his proclamation appear false. His displeasure, on this account, is heightened by an incident. A plant [a palmchrist], which had rapidly shot up, had refreshed him with its shade. But during the night it is destroyed by a worm; and when, on the day following, a scorching wind augments the burning heat of the sun, Jonah despairs of life [" *meint Jonah am Leben verzweifeln zu müssen*," thinks that he must despair of life]. But God had appointed this incident for the purpose of showing him the unreasonableness of his displeasure. "Dost thou have pity on an insignificant plant, and shall not I have pity on the great city?" (Chap. iv.)

II. *The Historical Character of the Book.*

The narrative indicates history; for it designates its hero, not by a general or symbolical, but by a historical name, — that of Jonah. And not merely this; but it subjoins a patronymic also, "the son of Amittai." Jonah, the prophet, the son of Amittai, is a historical person. We learn from 2 Kings xiv. 25, that he was a native of Gath-Hepher,[2] which was, according to Jewish tradition, as given by Jerome, in his preface to this book, a small village, two miles from Sepphoris, called in his time Diocæsaria, on the road to Tiberias. [" *Geth in secundo Sephorim miliario, quæ hodie appellatur Diocæsaria, euntibus Tiberiadem haud grandis est viculus.*"— Hieronymus.] This description corresponds to the situation of the present village of Meshad, north of Nazareth, where in fact a grave is pointed out as that of Jonah. [Quaresmius, ii. 855; Robinson, *Palestine*, iii. 449; *Bib. Researches*, p. 140.] He foretold to Jeroboam II. (B. C. 824–783) the success of his wars for the extension [the restoration of

1 [" *Thun eine grosse öffentliche Busse*," perform a great public [act of] repentance. — C. E.]

2 [The English version of 2 Kings xiv. 25, which reads . . . . "Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which *was* of Gath-Hepher," may be understood as meaning that Jonah was merely a resident of that village: but the Hebrew preposition *min*, rendered *of*, has, among other significations, that of source, or origin. See Gesenius' *Hebrew Lexicon*, s. v. — C. E.]

the ancient boundaries. — C. E.] of the kingdom of Israel; and was consequently an early contemporary of the prophet Amos. In the relations of the book to the history of the times, there is nothing to contradict the opinion that this was the period of Jonah's ministry [*Wirkungszeit*]. Assyria, which, according to the statement of Herodotus, ruled Hither Asia five hundred and twenty years, was then a powerful empire; and as Jeroboam's reign falls within the last century of the Assyrian dominion, Nineveh must certainly have possessed, at that time, the great extent which is assigned to it in this book, and which is also attested by profane authors. The separate cities of which this great metropolis [*Weltstadt*] was made up, were also of a very ancient foundation. (Comp. with 1, 2.) And, if twenty years after the death of Jeroboam, Menahem became tributary to the Assyrian king, Pul (2 K. xv. 19), it is obviously no rash assumption to affirm that even in the time of Jeroboam the Assyrians could not have been a strange people to the Israelites.

The more special historical characteristics, which an historical interpretation, something more than acute, believes that it has discovered in this book, namely, that Jonah went on a political mission to Nineveh, the nature of which it undertakes to determine (Forbiger, Goldhorn), belong of course to the domain of fiction and hypothesis. To the same place we assign the fables of the Rabbins, that can be gleaned in Carpzov (*Introd.* ii. 346), concerning the person and history of Jonah, together with the ingenious combinations of the same history with profane Mythology in Forbiger, Rosenmüller, Friedrichsen, Baur, and, in part also, Hitzig. So, then, even at an early period, the narrative of this book was considered historical. (The earliest reference to it is found in Tobit xiv. 8, LXX.) The arguments which have been raised against the historical character of the recorded events, reduce themselves (comp. 3 below) to the incredibility of the reported incidents of Jonah's life; and on a closer examination (comp. 3, 7; 4, 6), to the incomprehensibility of the miracle of the fish, which, in very early times, provoked mockery and jest. (Lucian, *Veræ Hist.*, i. § 30 f. ed. Bip.; *Augustini Ep.* 102, *opp.* ed. Migne, ii. p. 382.) They are consequently of a subjective nature. The analogies adduced in support of this miracle may be adapted to facilitate belief in this history, on the part of him who is inclined to believe, or who already believes, without such aid; but they will hardly convince the unbeliever [*Gegner*]; and they were evidently not in the mind of the author, who undoubtedly intended to record a miracle, and not a natural event. ["We feel ourselves precluded from any doubt of the reality of the transactions recorded in this book, by the simplicity of the language itself; by the historical allusions in Tobit xiv. 4–vi. 15, and Josephus, *Ant.*, ix. 10, sec. 2; and by the accordance with other authorities of the historical and geographical notices; by the thought that we might as well doubt all other miracles in Scripture as doubt these ('*Quod aut omnia divina miracula credenda non sint, aut hoc cur non credatur causa nulla sit.*' Aug. *Ep.* cii. in *Quæst.* 6 *de Jona*, ii. 284; cf. Cyril. Alex. *Comment. in Jonam*, iii. 367–389); above all, by the explicit words and teaching of our blessed Lord himself (Mat. xii. 39, 41; xvi. 4; Luke xi. 29), and by the correspondence of the miracles in the histories of Jonah and the Messiah." — *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, s. v.* "Jonah." — C. E.]

[O. R. Hertwig's *Tables:* The historical truth of the narrative, assailed as early as the time of Lucian, is defended on the following grounds: —

(1.) The numerous historical and geographical statements bear in themselves a genuine historical character; for

- (*a.*) The mission of Jonah to Nineveh entirely agrees with the historical circumstances of his time.
- (*b.*) The description of the size of Nineveh harmonizes with the classical accounts of it. (Comp. Diod. Sic. ii. 3.)
- (*c.*) The deep moral corruption is attested by Nahum.
- (*d.*) The mourning of men and cattle (chap. iii. 5–8) is confirmed by Herodotus, ix. 24, as an Asiatic custom.

(2.) The fundamental idea of the book, and the psychologically faithful description of the personality of the prophet and of the other persons, — ship's crew and Ninevites, — entirely exclude fiction.

Compare Harless (in his *Zeitschr. für Protest.* 1851, xxi. 2) and M. Baumgarten.

(3.) The compilers of the Canon believed in the historical truth of the narrative, and for that reason received it among the prophetical writings.

(4.) The historical truth of the book is placed beyond all doubt by the words of Christ, Matt. xii. 39 ff.; xvi. 4; Luke xi. 29–32.

Compare Sack (*Christl. Apol.*) and Delitzsch. The belief of its historical character universally prevailed, not only in the Jewish Synagogue, but also in the Christian Church, until the middle of last century. (Tob. xiv. 8; LXX.; Joseph. *Ant.*)

In the last and present centuries the view that the book is a fiction was and has been maintained:—

(1.) An allegory: v. d. Hardt, Less, Palmer, Krahmer.

(2.) A legend: Eichhorn. A tale: Augusti, Roman, Müller, and others.

(3.) A myth, with Grecian (Forbiger, Rosenm., Friedrichsen), or with Assyr.-Babyl. elements (Baur).

(4.) A moral didactic fable, or parable (Pareau, Gesen., Jahn, de Wette, Winer, Knobel, Niemeyer, Paulus, Ewald, and others).

(5.) A prophetic didactic fiction (Koster, Jäger, Hitzig.) — C. E.]

III. *Symbolical Character of the Book.*

The main question is that which relates to the understanding of this book, not that concerning its historical contents [*Gehalt*], which will be answered differently, according to the degree in which the reader considers his conscience bound by the *fides historica* of the Holy Scriptures. Whether the events are taken from actual life or not, this much is evident, that the record of them is not the proper aim [*nicht Selbstzweck ist*] of the book: it is intended to communicate a deeper instruction in historical form.

That the book was written for the purpose of communicating such instruction is proved:—

1. From its position among the prophetical writings. The direct object of these writings is, without exception, to convey instruction in divine truth. If it be said, that the book was placed among the twelve Minor Prophets, because Jonah was its author, it may be replied, first, that of its authorship by Jonah we have nowhere any mention; and that, according to this rule, the Lamentations ought also to be placed among the prophetical books. Just with as little propriety can an argument be founded upon the fact that the book treats of the fortunes of a prophet, for according to this rule, Micah and Malachi would have no place among the prophetical writings; while on the other hand the books of Moses, from Exodus to Deuteronomy, and a whole series of chapters in the books of Kings, would be entitled to a place among these writings. If in the prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah, historical passages, or notices, are inserted, it is done that they may form the frame-work of the prophecy, serve to make it intelligible, and place it in organic connection with the facts; but throughout these prophets the prophetical element is the main part, on which the whole hinges. In the book of Jonah, on the other hand, this could still less be the object, as his prophecy is revoked, and thus forms, in the totality of the book, only a thing of passing moment [*vorübergehendes Moment*]. Moreover, that historical additions should be found in a long series of prophetical discourses is one thing, but that an entire independent book should be placed under this point of view, is quite another thing. Evidently the compilers of the Canon considered the book a purely prophetical one [*Rede*], whose historical manner of representation has the object of bringing its instruction within reach and of making it easily retained.

2. We find confirmation of this by inspection of the book itself, in which certain instructive truths—of which more hereafter—force themselves on the notice of the reader, and stand out so prominently that the interest of the narrator evidently does not attach to the person of whom he speaks, but manifestly to the events of his life [*Ergehen dieser Person*]. Precisely that, which, historically viewed, must appear the chief particular of the book, namely, the sparing of Nineveh, is marked with proportionally the least emphasis.

3. In addition to these considerations, and in harmony with them, is the style of the book. This is anything but the historical style. The author neglects a multitude of things, which he would have been obliged to mention had history been his principal aim. He says nothing of the sins of which Nineveh was guilty, and which might have formed the motive for its destruction; nothing of the long and difficult journey of the prophet to Nineveh; he is silent about the early dwelling-place of Jonah, about the place where he was vomited out upon the land; he does not mention whether and when Jonah offered and performed the offering and vow, which he promised and made (ii. 10); neither does he mention the name of the Assyrian king, nor take any notice of the subsequent fortunes of the prophet. In any case the narrative, if it were intended to be historical, would be incomplete by the frequent occurrence that circumstances, which are necessary for the connection of events, are men-

tioned later than they occurred, and only where attention is directed to them as having already happened. Should the observations mostly presented by Goldhorn and Hitzig be urged for the purpose of denying altogether that the Book of Jonah relates historical events, they must be deemed inadequate; but they certainly prove what Hengstenberg has fully done, that the author communicates historical events only so far as the object requires, to furnish an intelligible basis for the representation of a doctrinal object lying outside of the narrative; that the author, if he avails himself of the facts of history for his purpose, has still employed historical data with discrimination, in the light of, and according to the idea, which he intended to represent.

4. Circumstances are found so recorded, that without the supposition of a definite design and bearing of the narrative, this form of narration would be incomprehensible. If Jonah utters thanks in the belly of the fish, and not after he is safe on shore, then there is, unless this arrangement of events is required by a definite design, a want of physical truth, which cannot be concealed by any exegetical subtilty.

But the questions now arise, what are the design and teaching of the book? and how are they made available in the narrative? Is it a *single moral lesson*, of which the entire narrative is the foundation, after the manner of a didactic fable? Or is the whole representation *symbolical*, exhibiting a complete system [*Zusammenhang*] of doctrines and ideas, a delineation of an entire development in the Kingdom of God?

In answer to the first of these suppositions it can be said, that a single tenet of revelation, or of morality, is incongruous with the contents of the whole book. Each of the individual tendencies advanced by Exegetes neglects one or the other part of the book, and can, therefore, not sufficiently explain the peculiar literary character of the whole. "There is no didactic unity in the book." (Sack.) In the manifold applications made of the book, the doctrine has been discovered in it, that God cares for other nations also (Semler); that He is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the heathen (D. Michaelis, Eichhorn, Böhme, Pareau, Gesenius, De Wette, Winer, Knobel, and many others); and the view of Gramberg and Friedrichsen amounts to essentially the same thing, according to which the conduct of the heathen and their treatment should serve as an example of repentance to Israel. But according to these views the second chapter is entirely superfluous, and Friedrichsen, with great difficulty, accommodates the first to them. The matter is not improved by discovering in the book, in addition to instruction for the Jews, an admonition to toleration for the heathen. (Griesinger). Still less satisfactory are general truths, such as those that Niemeyer, Hezel, Möller, Meyer, Paulus, and others have found in the book: namely, "God's ways are not as our ways." "The office of prophet is arduous, but of great worth" [*Köstlich*]. "Jehovah is kind and readily forgives." "God is ready to avenge and to forgive," etc. And, if converting the doctrine into a special aim [*Tendenz*], Hitzig has developed the suggestions of Köster and Jäger to the view, that the book was written to remove the doubts which might attach themselves to the non-fulfillment of prophecy (here, according to Hitzig, with special reference to the alleged non-fulfillment of the prophecy of Obadiah), then the great preparations which were devoted to so insignificant an object, are not in keeping with it. Then chapters iii. and iv. would be amply sufficient. In the homiletical and catechetical use of the book, one must not leave unnoticed all those truths and definite purposes; and he will also determine, on account of their multitude, to bestow increased esteem and consideration upon the opulence of this little book, which, in four short chapters, discloses new contents to each inquirer; but even the multiplicity of the constructions put upon it [*Bestimmungen*] proves that none exhausts the contents of the book to the degree that one can attribute to it the character of a didactic fable, or moral narrative.

There is a still more cogent argument. The book is, as we have seen, a prophetical one. But in all prophecy, this kind of narrative is nowhere to be met with. No narrative is found there, which should solely have the object that the hearer, or reader, may draw from it an individual truth as a moral. On the other hand, it is quite a frequent kind of prophetical composition to symbolize the past, present, or future destinies of a great community in a single concrete form, so that this representative concrete appears in a whole series of relations as a *symbol* of that community. Of this, the Vineyard, Isaiah, chap. v., is a familiar example. Ezekiel, particularly, is full of such symbols, among which the figurative representation of the fate of Jerusalem, chap. xvi., and the allegorizing of Judah and Ephraim by the two sisters, Aholah and Aholibah, are characteristic of this species of prophetic style.

And still nearer to our purpose stands the most profound symbolical discourse of the Old Testament, Isaiah xl.–lxvi., in which everything, deserts, water, bread, light, Zion, are symbols. and under all these symbols the comprehension of the Israelitish national community, under the individual designation of the servant of God, occupies the highest place, since it is explained by the spirit of prophecy as the type of the true Israel manifested in Christ.

That the book of Jonah is to be counted among these symbolical prophecies has by no means escaped the notice of interpreters. The anticipation of it gleams through the words of old Marck: "*Scriptum est magna parte historicum, sed ita ut in historia ipsa lateat maximi vaticinii mysterium, atque ipse fatis suis non minus quam effatis vatem se verum demonstret.*" It forms also the minimum of an originally right starting-point in the peculiar conceits, whimsically embellished by the theological mythus, of Von der Hardt, that Nineveh represents Samaria, but that Jonah is an enigmatical name for the kings Manasseh and Josiah. Here belong also Herder's attempt to represent Jonah as a symbol of the order of the prophets, and Krahmer's view that Jonah was a warning example for his contemporaries.

On the same line, and equally removed from the purely parabolical and purely historical view, lies the attempt made by several modern divines and commentators, after the example of Sack (in harmony with the common effort to guide the exegesis of the Old Testament into the profound meaning of Scripture, and into the deep questions of the close connection between the Old and New Testaments), to represent Jonah as a type of Christ. Here particularly, we may mention Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, and Keil. (See below). This typical view of the book has a strong claim to be received, if we consider the declaration of our Saviour (Matth. xii. 40). But notwithstanding it may be said, first, that this view does not embrace the whole book, but must, along with our Saviour's declaration, be restricted to chapter ii.; and again, that it shares the defects of every exposition of the Old Testament given entirely from the point of view of the New Testament; and that it is not suited to the peculiarity of the Old Testament standpoint, and to the independent significance of the book in the collection of the Canon. It is in part not enough, namely, the mere New Testament element; in part too much, to wit, the discovery of the fulfillment already in that which is preliminary. It is certainly true that the whole Old Testament revelation receives light from the New Testament from first to last, which enables us to perceive its teleological connection tending onward till it reaches the goal; and yet each statement and each book of the Old Testament, as a member of the organism of the Holy Scriptures, has an aim peculiar to itself. And the full authority of the typical interpretation will then first come into the true light, when one places the genuine sense already drawn from the contents of the book, under the light of the end, namely, the fulfillment. Let us attempt an interpretation of the symbol, an interpretation standing upon its own, and that an Old Testament foundation.

Jonah is a prophet; his special mission in the book is a prophetic one. There is in the Old Testament only one community to which the prophetic vocation belongs, — namely, the people of Israel. For the purpose that in him all the tribes of the earth should be blessed, Israel was founded as a nation in his ancestor, Abraham (Gen. xii.), and God chose him as his servant, to disseminate the light, the knowledge of God's law among the heathen. (Is. xlii. 1). *Jonah is Israel.* Nineveh — in the view of the author of the book the type of a great heathen city — is, in a similar relation, the representative of the heathen world, as are moreover Babylon (Is. xiii. f.), and Edom (Is. lxiii.). It is selected here, because the contact with Nineveh marks the decisive turning-point between the old time, when Israel, joyful in his strength, subjected the neighboring nations, and the new time, in which prophecy, through contact with the Mesopotamian powers, became of a universal character; because their captivity among these nations, though at first a penal calamity determined upon them, had the ultimate purpose of freeing the kingdom of God from the narrow limits of its national foundation, and of preparing its dissemination over the whole earth.

Israel has the mission of preaching God's doctrine and law to the heathen world. But he has a greater desire for gain and its pursuits. He shuns his calling and goes on board a merchantman. He abandons his intimate relation to Zion and hastens far away, where no mission is assigned to him, where he thinks that the arm of God cannot reach him. For it also belongs to his ungodly prejudices to believe that God's arm and work are limited to the holy land — a prejudice which already in Jacob, the ancestor whose character represents typically the national faults, was to his shame rebuked (Gen. xxviii. 16 f.).

But God reproves the fugitive. In the terrors, which must fall upon him, according to the divine decree, Jonah does not seek God, but sleeps, while the heathen pray. All heathen nations — the individual members of the crew represent nations, for they pray each to his God (i. 5) — might, by their sincere idol-worship, administer a rebuke [*zur Beschämung dienen*] to the godlessness of God's people, in their extreme distress. They cast the lot, which brings death to him; this they do not of their own choice, but by the appointment of God, which they unconsciously follow. The lot falls for a war of extermination against Israel. Jonah must announce his own fate. Israel has the law, which carries the curse in itself, and, like a sword suspended by a horse-hair, hangs over the head of the nation (comp. on Micah vi. 16); he has prophecy, which, confined to him, prophecies a calamitous end to the whole nation (Micah iii. 12 i. 8). Jonah is thrown into the sea and swallowed by a monster. The sea-monster is, by no means, an unusual phenomenon in prophetic typology. It is the secular power appointed by God for the scourge of Israel and of the earth. (Is. xxvii. 1; comp. on ii. 1.) Israel is abandoned to the night and gloom of exile, after the catastrophe of the national overthrow, because he neglected his vocation. Hence the fact that Jonah prays and turns to God, before his deliverance from the fish's belly, receives an illustration. In adversity Israel shall again seek God. In that which properly belongs to penal sufferings, he shall nevertheless, at the same time, acknowledge the gracious hand of God (Hos. ii. 16). He shall, also, in his miserable existence in a foreign land, not forget his holy calling. He shall not forget that his preservation as a nation, though as outcast, is a saving act of God. This becomes still clearer through the close relation, in which this prayer of Jonah stands to the longing and lamentations in exile, of the people of God, *e. g.* Psalms xlii. and lxxxviii. in which also the deeps of the sea symbolize the misery of Israel.

There [in the deep] Jonah remains three days and three nights, a definite, but an ideal time (comp. on ii. 1); a similar time is allotted by Hosea, also, for the punishment of Israel (Hos. vi. 2). Then the fish vomits him out; the exile must have an end, for God has appointed the fish; not of its own power and will did it swallow Jonah.

But with the hoped for restoration, the vocation of Israel is not revoked. Jonah is sent the second time to Nineveh; and he must preach that the heathen world shall perish; for that is the will of God concerning the nations that do not obey Him (Micah v. 14). But Israel says, What shall I preach? It is truly cause for despair, that so much has already been prophesied concerning the destruction of the heathen, and that it has come to nothing. They remain peaceful and quiet. If my preaching accomplishes its object, they will be saved, for God is merciful and gracious. (Comp. Zech. i. 11.) This instance [*Moment*] [of doubt and irresolution on the part of Israel. — C. E.] is also portrayed in the history of Jonah. Indeed, Jonah's preaching works repentance, and, consequently, forbearance; and reproach proceeds from his mouth. God corrects him by the incident of the palmchrist. Thereby Israel, too, is instructed. There lies in the sparing of Nineveh, before the correction of Jonah, the type of the future ingathering of the multitude of the heathen before the Jewish people, which must first be humbled and broken. (Comp. Micah iv.) And the prophet who wrote the history of Jonah, has exhibited the ground of this future, momentous to his people, as one lying within the Old Testament knowledge of God and his kingdom; in the mercy of God in view of repentance, and in the obduracy of Israel against the divine goodness, which quarrels with God instead of repenting. So must it truly come to pass, what Isaiah says (lxv. 1), that God is found of those who sought Him not, and who were not called by his name. (Comp. Rom. x. 20.)

Upon this teleological prophecy nothing more can follow; the book naturally closes with this according to our view. It becomes evident, according to this view, that the book is one of universal tendency, and raises the idea of Israel to a height similar to that described, Isaiah xl. ff.; only that there the bright side fulfilled in Christ develops itself from the mission of the servant. Though here the dignity of the mission is not less marked than there, yet the natural obstacles in the character of the people are brought into the foreground, by which it came to pass that the true Israel, at last, was not received by his own, and was crucified by contemporary Israel. Further, the reciprocal relation is hence clearly exhibited, which the symbolical character has had upon the treatment of the historical narrative; and the historical substratum upon the symbolical representation. There is no doubt that the truth to be exhibited could have been more briefly and more directly explained in another way (as this holds good generally in the case of parables); but the author found, in a history ready to

his hand,[1] the profound idea, which the Spirit moved him to teach, and in order to do justice to the historical, he made casual mention in the narrative, of much which, at the first glance, might appear, from the point of view of a didactic object, as unimportant.

But on the other hand, it could not fail that his design to write symbolic history made him indifferent to the pragmatic connection of the historical substratum in itself; hence the chasms and the incompleteness of statement noted by Hengstenberg, as soon as the rule of the historical style is applied to it.

Hence, finally, we learn from the book itself, its typical significance in relation to the New Testament. That Israel, as he lives a unity in the complex of God's ideas [*in der Ideenwelt Gottes*], is the type of Christ, is indubitable to every one who has once earnestly reflected upon the wonderful harmony between the image of the servant of God (Is. xlix. ff.) and Christ, and who has sought to explore the concealed vein of Old Testament history, according to the clear exposition of the Apostle Paul (Gal. iii. 16). If Jonah is a type of Israel, and Israel a type of Christ, then the typical relation already traced out in Sack (see below), is suggested between Jonah and Christ; and the reference to this type, prominently presented in Matt. xii. 40, comp. xvi. 4; Mk. viii. 11 f.; Luke xi. 29 ff.; John xii. 23 f., is only a single, though the most important instance [*Moment*]. Indeed it is according to the intimation of these passages, that as the sparing of Jonah in the belly of the fish and his subsequent preaching of repentance (Luke xi. 32), were a sign to the Ninevites, which must bring to them faith or judgment, so the preservation of Jesus in the grave, and the continued proclamation of the Risen One, are a sign to the world of judgment and of faith, by which the separation of mankind proceeds continually with inexorable power. Other relations can still be discovered without forced interpretation. It seems to me particularly worth considering how the voluntary labors of the ship's crew (i. 13) did not gain the shore; there was no peace until the sin-offering consecrated by God was offered.

[The mission and vocation of Israel are set forth in Is. xlii. 6: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." "This description is entirely appropriate, not only to the Head, but to the Body also, in subordination to him. Not only the Messiah, but the Israel of God was sent to be a mediator or connecting link between Jehovah and the nations." Israel was "a covenant race or middle people between God and the apostate nations." (Alexander on Isaiah, chap. xlii. 6.) Jonah commissioned by God to preach against the great heathen city, Nineveh, is a type of Israel in his mission and vocation.

"The book of Jonah contains no prediction of a direct Christian import. But he is, in his own person, a type, a prophetic sign of Christ. The miracle of his deliverance from his three days of death in the body of the whale, is the expressive image of the resurrection of Christ. Our Saviour has fixed the truth and certainty of this type. Matt. xii. 40.

"Further, the whole import of Jonah's mission partakes of the Christian character. For when we see that he is sent not only to carry the tidings of the divine judgment, but also to exemplify the grant of the divine mercy to a great heathen city; that is, to be a preacher of repentance; and that the repentance of the Ninevites through his mission, brings them to know "a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repenting Him of the evil" (Jonah iv. 2); — without staying to discuss whether all this be a *formal type* of the *genius* of the Christian religion, it is plainly a *real example* of some of its chief properties, in the manifested efficacy of repentance, the grant of pardon, and the communication of God's mercy to the heathen world." (Davison *on Prophecy*, pp. 200, 201.) — C. E.]

[O. R. Hertwig's Tables: Without prejudice to its historical sense, the following authors admit a symbolico-typical character of the Book: —

(1.) Keil, Del., Baumg., Hengst.: Jonah is a type of Christ. (Also the Church Fathers, Marck and others, on account of Matt. xii. 40.)

(2.) Kleinert: Jonah is the representative of Israel in his [Israel's] prophetic vocation to the heathen world. — C. E.]

IV. *Date.*

On this point two deductions follow from the preceding exposition: first, that Jonah himself could not have written this book; second, that its composition is separated by a long

[1] Compare H. Ewald, on the Poetical Books of the Old Testament in the Introduction to the Book of Job: the invention of a history from its inception, the production of a person intended to be historical, wholly from the imagination of the poet, are entirely foreign to antiquity, because extremely forced and remote.

period from the time of Jereboam II., in whose reign its action falls. For disregarding the fact that this manner of speaking of one's self in the third person, does not occur elsewhere in the prophets, with the exception of Isaiah xxxvi.–xxxix., taken from an annalistic source, though written by the prophet, and with the exception of short introductory headings to prophetic passages (compare on the other hand, *e. g.*, Ezékiel), and that it has also little probability, the historical style is wanting to the book, and still more, there is wanting the character of things experienced by the writer [*selbsterlebter Dinge*, self experienced things]. And indeed it is not well to assume either that a man should make his own fortunes the subject of a symbolical narrative, or that Jonah, according to the time in which he lived and the aggregate condition of prophetic knowledge of that time, should see so clearly, portrayed in the wonderful fortunes which happened to him, according to the narrative of this book, over its personal significance, the lines for the whole future development of the kingdom of God and its relation to the heathen world, as they have been here exhibited in harmony with the prophetic revelations, which developed themselves long after the time of Jonah in the vision of the Babylonish exile; especially because the book evidently does not advance the claim of intending to make the announcement of a germinant, though not begun future, but to furnish an understanding of the ways of God at the time present. We find that personification of Israel, its relation to the prophetic mission and to the exile, first in Isaiah xl. ff., in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and especially so strongly marked in Ezekiel, that the author of this book cannot be elevated to a grade of prophecy like this. It agrees with this, that the next object of the book, according to the above acknowledged meaning of chap. ii., is exhausted in rousing and bringing the Israelites to the consciousness of their vocation, according as they, in the Captivity and after it, were situated with reference to the heathen. It cannot even be denied that the literary character of the book also gives it this place. That the psalm in the second chapter is not a prayer repeated literally from memory, but a free reproduction (whose relation to the object above stated, cannot escape the notice of the reader), is pretty generally acknowledged. "Not that he uttered just these words with his mouth, and placed them in such order, for he was not in so happy a state as to compose so fine a hymn. But it is therein shown how he felt; what thoughts were in his heart, while he was engaged in the hard struggle with death." (Luther.) The reproduction indeed depends upon passages in the Psalter. And though it might be conceded that ver. 2 is not, as would appear at first sight, borrowed from Psalm cxx. 1, written after the exile, but from Psalm xviii. 7, there still remains a series of other verbal coincidences with Psalms xlii., lxxxviii., and others, which, like these Psalms themselves can only be explained from the side of the Captivity. Just so is the description of the repentance (chap. iii.), which the Ninevites engaged in by order of their king, made up throughout of recollections of the prophetic mode of expression; resting not only upon Joel i. 20, but also upon Ezekiel xviii. 23; and in general a realization of Ezekiel iii. 6. Not that thereby the historical character of this repentance would be destroyed: we find here, as in the prayer (chap. ii.), views and special references that do not admit of a general solution. But the mode of expression fixes the time of the exile as the date of the book.

To this may finally be added some external peculiarities of language and representation. The richness of the language and the use of words, likewise place the book in the times of the later Hebraism. In common with Ezekiel and Jeremiah, it has the words not occurring elsewhere: מַלָּח, mariner, i. 5 (Ez. xxvii. 9, 27, 29); עָשִׁת, i. 6 (comp. Jer. v. 28); the form רִבּוֹ, iv. 11, compare with Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles; the word הֶעֱבִר, iii. 6, with the signification to remove, to lay aside, compare with Chronicles and Esther. Further, טַעַם, iii. 7, in the sense of edict, and סְפִינָה, ship, i. 5, are words wholly foreign to the Hebrew commonwealth of letters and of North-Semitic origin. And hence, also, other phenomena of language, that were not impossible in the time of Jonah, but yet foreign to the old prophetic style, gain importance, as for instance, the combinations, after the Aramaic manner, of בְּשֶׁלִּי, i. 12; בְּשֶׁלְּמִי, i. 7; and the simple שֶׁ itself for אֲשֶׁר, iv. 10; and also the periphrase of the object-accusative by means of ל, iv. 6. In however small a degree a determinate meaning can be ascribed to such phenomena in language in the small compass of the realm of Hebrew literature, yet are they in nowise worthless, especially in a book whose author wholly omits to make any mention of himself. To this may be added the fact that an author in Jonah's time, in mentioning the city of Nineveh, would hardly

have found it necessary for the information of his readers, to subjoin: "and Nineveh was a great city," iii. 3; so finally, the phenomenon of our having obviously in chapters iii. and iv. two accounts, which state essentially the same thing, the one in laconic touches, the other in more minute details (a circumstance in the known style of oriental and popular narrative, that in general need not surprise us), and which agree verbally and intimately blend with one another. First account, C. iii., 1–5, 10; iv. 1–5. Second account, iii. 1–4, 6–10; iv. 1–3, 6–11). This observation proves two different things: first that we have to do, not with a parabolic fiction, but with a fact historically transmitted several times. Secondly, so long a space has intervened between the events and the record, that two traditions could be formed in the mean time; that therefore a later author, and not Jonah, has compiled this account in systematic form. The unity of the book, which has been denied by Nachtigal, with much ingenuity, is internally and externally quite indivisible. The word שְׁבִית connects both the great halves in the most intimate manner; everywhere we meet with certain standing formulæ (וימן, ii. 1; iv. 6 ff.; the great city, i. 2; iii. 3, etc.), and idioms (comp. especially the peculiar form of the hysteron-proteron i. 5–10; iii. 6 f.; iv. 5); and the internal unity follows naturally from the interpretation given under 2.

To sum up, one cannot but ascribe the composition of the book to a contemporary and fellow-sufferer of Ezekiel, to whom allusions most manifold have met us in the course of exposition. But the *position* which it occupies among the oldest prophets, is easily explained from the circumstance that the object of the narrative, and not the author, is kept in view, and therefore Jonah, as the one who first came in contact with Assyria, properly precedes Micah, that prophet who lived under the Assyrian oppression, during its middle period, and Nahum, who announced definitely the fate of Nineveh.

Luther: Some would maintain, as Jerome shows, that this prophet, Jonah, was the son of the widow at Zarephath, near Sidon, who nourished the prophet Elijah during the famine, mentioned in 1 K. xvii. 10, and 2 K. xiv. 25. The reason they assign is, that he calls himself here the son of Amittai, that is, a son of the true one, because his mother said to Elijah, when he raised him from the dead: "Now I know that the word of thy mouth is truth" (1 K. xvii. 24). Believe that who will, I do not believe it; but his father was called Amittai, in Latin *Verax* (true), in German *Wahrlich* (true), and was of Gath-Hepher, which city was in the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 13; 2 K. xiv. 25). The widow of Zarephath was also a heathen, as Christ informs us (Luke iv. 26); but Jonah confesses here (chap. i. 9), that he was a Hebrew.

I say this, therefore, that where we have the means, it is very well to know at what time and in what country a prophet lived. For it has this advantage, that we can better understand his book, if we know the time, place, person, and history [of that period]. We find then that Jonah lived at the time of king Jeroboam, whose grandfather was king Jehu, when king Uzziah reigned in Judah, when also the prophets, Hosea, Amos, and Joel lived in the same kingdom of Israel, in other places and cities. We can infer how eminently beloved a man Jonah was in the kingdom of Israel, and how God wrought by him a great work, from the fact that through his preaching, king Jeroboam was so successful as to regain all that Hazael, king of Syria, had detached from the kingdom of Israel, to which he had done so great damage, that the prophet Elisha wept over it, before it came to pass (2 K. viii. 11).

Whether Jonah counseled and assisted king Jeroboam before his experience in the whale, and at Nineveh, or after his return from that city, cannot be shown from Scripture. But it is probable that he first served and aided king Jeroboam in his country, until he had again set up and established the kingdom of Israel. After this he is sent of God out of his own country to Nineveh. For in his own country he had learned from experience how kind and gracious God was to the idolatrous kingdom of Israel; wherefore he expected that He would also be as kind and gracious toward Nineveh, so that his proclamation would be in vain and fruitless, as he himself confesses, and is angry thereat (ch. iv. 1, 2).

In short, such was the state of the world in the time of Jonah, that the supreme kingdom or empire in it, was in Assyria, at Nineveh, as it was afterward at Babylon, and subsequently at Rome. Besides, there were at this time the other kingdoms, Syria, Israel, Judah, Edom, Moab, each independent. The kingdom of Israel prospered under king Jeroboam on Jonah's account; so the kingdom of Judah was prosperous under king Uzziah.

Sack: Jonah was saved from the depths of the sea, and preserved in the body of the sea-

monster, for the purpose of preaching repentance to the Ninevites, a people with the common mercies of Providence thrown around them, not by themselves, but by Jehovah. They thereupon repent. This wonderful preservation for the effective preaching of repentance took place, and was recorded just as it happened, that it might be a type of the Deliverer of the nation, who also entered the depths of the earth, and yet was preserved, and within three days was made alive, and who was to perform the great work of "preaching repentance and remission of sins among all nations" (Luke xxiv. 47), with results so much more victorious, and under the opposition of Israel. Some one besides Jonah might have preached to the Ninevites; and Jonah might have been brought to do it in some other way than by a wonderful deliverance; the conversion of the Ninevites had also just as little need of becoming a portion of Biblical history, as so many transient returns of an ancient people to a better state of piety, have had. But all this had to come to pass, because nothing more suitable could be conceived whereby to typify the greatest deliverance, by means of which the most successful sermon on repentance was to become possible. As Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites was against his will, so the preaching of Christ to the heathen was against the will of Israel: they were awakened to repentance, and the Saviour could on that account say with such significance: "No other sign shall be given to this generation than that of Jonah the prophet," since through the possibility of the repetition of this sign, — the preservation in the depths of the earth, —just the strongest proof of the reprobate character of this generation was given. This is not done away by the passage in Luke xi. 30, where that generation is directly compared with the Ninevites; for this can refer only to the experience of such wonderful deliverance, and does not destroy the contrast that runs through all these passages, between the baser Jews and the better ancient and modern heathen. (Comp. Matt. viii. 11.) But the differences that Jonah remained alive and Christ was made alive; that Jonah went against his will; and Christ, out of love, commanded [his disciples] to preach to all nations; that Jonah afterward was angry thereat [God's sparing Nineveh], which was exactly repeated in the case of Israel; — all these are naturally founded on the history as such, and vanish before the pervading similarity of the divine method of dealing before and after the preaching to the heathen. Be it so, that before the appearance of the Saviour, pity to the heathen, in a special manner, must have occurred to the readers of Jonah as the real sense of the book; after that appearance, mercy displaying itself, in the giving up and preservation of the Messiah, is taken as the true sense of Jonah; and this sense is a historico-typical one.

Keil: The mission of Jonah is a fact of symbolical and typical significance, which was intended not only to enlighten Israel as to the position of the heathen world in relation to the kingdom of God, but at the same time to typify the future admission of the heathen, who observe God's word, to a participation of the salvation prepared in Israel for all nations. This, however, does not exhaust the deeper meaning of the history of Jonah. It reaches still further and culminates in the typical character of the three days' sojourn of Jonah in the belly of the fish, of which Christ informs us, when He referred the Jews to the sign of the prophet Jonah, in the words: "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matt. xii. 40.) In order to understand this type, that is to say, the divinely appointed connection between the typical event and its antitype, we are furnished with a key in the answer which Jesus gave, when, a short time before his passion, Philip and Andrew told Him, that certain Greeks, among those who had come up to worship at the feast, desired to see Him. This answer consists of a twofold statement (John xii. 23 f.): "The time is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;" and xii. 32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." This answer of Jesus amounts to this: that the time for the admission of the heathen had not yet come; but in the words, "the hour is come," etc., is contained the explanation, that the heathen have only to wait patiently a little longer, since their union with Christ, with which the reply concludes (ver. 32), is directly connected with the glorification of the Son of Man (Hengstenberg, on John xii. 20). This declaration of our Lord, that his death and glorification are necessary, in order that He may draw all men, even the heathen, to himself, or that by his death He may break down the wall of partition, by which the heathen till then had been shut out of the kingdom of God, at which He had already hinted in John x. 15, 16,

teaches us to recognize the history of Jonah as an important, significant link in the chain of development of the divine plan of salvation.

Niebuhr: By the way, we must call attention to the fact, that the threatened, but revoked destruction of Nineveh, has reference likely to the shock which Nineveh suffered through the revolt of Media and Babylon, and which bears wholly the character of a postponed overthrow of the kingdom. The destruction is to occur after forty days (years). Now Jonah, the son of Amittai (2 K. xiv. 25). is mentioned in connection with Jeroboam II. (about 75–34 N.) as a prophet. There is nothing said as to the time when Jonah lived. But as in those times it was the rule for prophecies to have reference only to brief periods, it is probable that Jonah was a contemporary of Jeroboam, and that he prophesied against Nineveh forty years before the revolt of Media, which began some years prior to I. N.

[O. R. Hertwig's Tables give the following summary of views respecting the date of the Book: —

Keil fixes it soon after the events recorded in it, and the return of Jonah to his native land.

Others place it at a later time for the following reasons: —

(1.) The book contains Aramaisms, which indicate a later age than that of the events which it records. (De Wette.)

(2.) Chapter iii. 3, supposes that the destruction of Nineveh had already taken place. (Ewald.)

(3.) ii. 3–10, contains many reminiscences from the Psalms.

(4.) Chapter ii. 5, 8, supposes that the temple had been rebuilt. (Krahmer.)

For these reasons the following dates have been assumed: —

(*a.*) The time of the Assyrian exile. (Goldhorn.)

(*b.*) The time of Josiah. (Gesen., Rosenm., and Berth.)

(*c.*) The time of the Babylonian exile. (Jäger, Kleinert.)

(*d.*) The post-exile period. (Jahn, Knobel, Köster, Ewald.)

(*e.*) After the year 515 B. C. (Krahmer.)

(*f.*) The third century. (Vatke, *Bibl. Theol.*)

(*g.*) The time of the Maccabees. (Hitzig.) — C. E.]

["It is the uniform tradition among the Jews, that Jonah himself wrote the history of his mission; and on this principle alone the book was placed among the prophets. For no books were admitted among the prophets but those which the arranger of the Canon *believed* (if this was the work of the Great Synagogue), or (if it was the work of Ezra), *knew* to have been written by persons called to the prophetic office. Hence the Psalms of David (although many are prophetic, and our Lord declares him to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost), and the book of Daniel were placed in a separate class, because their authors, although eminently endowed with prophetic gifts, did not exercise the pastoral office of the Prophet. Histories of the prophets, as Elijah and Elisha, stand, not under their own names, but in the books of the prophets who wrote them. Nor is the book of Jonah a history of the Prophet, but of that one mission to Nineveh. Every notice of the prophet is omitted, except what bears on that mission. The book also begins with just that same authentication with which all other prophetic books begin. As Hosea and Joel and Micah and Zephaniah open, "The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea," Joel, Micah, Zephaniah; and other prophets in other ways ascribe their books not to themselves, but to God, so Jonah opens, "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying." This inscription is an integral part of the book; as is marked by the word, "saying." . . . . The words, "The word of the Lord came to," are the acknowledged form in which the commission of God to prophesy is recorded. It is used of the commission to deliver a simple prophecy, or it describes the whole collection of prophecies, with which any prophet was intrusted: "The word of the Lord which came to Micah or Zephaniah." But the whole history of the prophecy is bound up with, and a sequel of these words.

"Nor is there anything in the style of the prophet at variance with this.

"It is strange," continues Dr. Pusey, from whom these observations have been quoted, "that at any time beyond the babyhood of criticism, any argument should be drawn from the fact that the Prophet writes of himself in the third person. Manly criticism has been ashamed to use the argument as to the commentaries of Cæsar, or the Anabasis of Xenophon. However the genuineness of these works may have been at times questioned, here we were on the ground of genuine criticism, and no one ventured to use an argument so palpably

idle. It has been pointed out that minds so different as Barhebræus, the great Jacobite historian of the east, and Frederick the Great. wrote of themselves in the third person; as did also Thucydides and Josephus, even after they had attested that the history in which they so speak, was written by themselves.

But the real ground lies much deeper. It is the *exception*, when any sacred writer speaks of himself in the first person. Ezra and Nehemiah do so; for they are giving an account, not of God's dealings with his people, but of their own discharge of a definite office, allotted to them by man. Solomon does so in Ecclesiastes, because he is giving the history of his own experience; and the vanity of all human things, in themselves, could be attested so impressively by no one as by one who had all which man's mind could imagine.

On the contrary, the prophets, unless they speak of God's revelations to them, speak of themselves in the third person. Thus Amos relates in the first person, what God showed him in vision; for God spoke to him, and he answered and pleaded with God. In relating his persecution by Amaziah, he passes at once to the third: "Amaziah said to Amos: Then answered Amos and said to Amaziah (Amos vii. 12, 14). In like way, Isaiah speaks of himself in the third person, when relating how God sent him to meet Ahaz, commanded him to walk three years, naked and barefoot; Hezekiah's message to him, to pray for his people, and his own prophetic answer; his visit to Hezekiah in the king's sickness, his warning to him, his prophecy of his recovery, the sign which at God's command Isaiah gave him, and the means of healing he appointed."

Dr. Pusey instances the other prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Haggai, Moses; in the New Testament, St. John, who styles himself, when referring to himself, "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

"As for the few words which persons who disbelieved in miracles selected out of the book of Jonah as a plea for removing it far down beyond the period when those miracles took place, they rather indicate the contrary. They are all genuine Hebrew words or forms, except the one Aramaic name for the decree of the king of Nineveh, which Jonah naturally heard in Nineveh itself.

"A writer,[1] equally unbelieving, who got rid of the miracles by assuming that the book of Jonah was meant only for a moralizing fiction, found no counter-evidence in the language, but ascribed it unhesitatingly to the Jonah, son of Amittai, who prophesied in the reign of Jeroboam II. He saw the nothingness of the so-called proof, which he had no longer any interest in maintaining.

"The examination of these words will require a little detail, yet it may serve as a specimen (it is no worse than its neighbors) of the way in which the disbelieving school picked out a few words of a Hebrew prophet or section of a prophet, in order to disparage the genuineness of what they did not believe."

I will condense Dr. Pusey's remarks on the words in question. The words are these: —

(1.) "The word *sephinah*, lit. 'a decked vessel,' is a genuine Hebrew word from *saphan*, covered, ceiled. The word was borrowed from the Hebrew, not by Syrians or Chaldees only, but by the Arabians, in none of which dialects is it an original word. A word plainly is original in that language in which it stands connected with other meanings of the same root, and not in that in which it stands isolated. Naturally, too, the term for a *decked* vessel would be borrowed by inland people, as the Syrians, from a nation living on the sea-shore, not conversely. This is the first occasion for mentioning a *decked* vessel. It is related that Jonah went in fact 'below deck,' 'was gone down into the sides of the decked vessel.' Three times in those verses, when Jonah did not wish to express that the vessel was decked, he uses the common Hebrew word, *oniyyah*. It was then of set purpose that he, in the same verse, used the two words, *oniyyah* and *sephinah*.

2. "*Mallach* is also a genuine Hebrew word, from *melach*, *salt* sea, as ἁλιεύς, from ἅλς, 'salt,' then (*masc.*) in poetry, 'brine.'

3. "*Rab hachobel*, 'chief of the sailors,' 'captain.' *Rab* is Phœnician also, and this was a Phœnician vessel. *Chobel*, which is joined with it, is a Hebrew, not Aramaic word.

4. "*Ribbo*, 'ten thousand,' they say is a word of later Hebrew. It occurs in a Psalm of David and in Hosea.

5. "*Vith'ashehath*, 'thought, purposed,' is also an old Hebrew word. The root occurs in Job, a Psalm, and the Canticles. In the Syriac it does not occur, nor in the extant Chaldee, in the sense in which it is used by Jonah.

[1] Paulus.

6. "The use of the abridged forms of the relative *she* for *asher*, twice in composite words *beshellemi*, *beshelli* (the fuller form, *baasher lemi*, also occurring), and once in union with the noun *shebbin*.

"There is absolutely no plea whatever for making this an indication of a later style, and yet it occurs in every string of words, which have been assumed to be indications of such style. It is not Aramaic at all, but Phœnician and Old Hebrew. In Phœnician, *esh* is the relative, which corresponds the more with the Hebrew in that the following letter was doubled, as in the Punic words in Plautus, *syllohom*, *siddoberim*, it enters into two proper names, both of which occur in the Pentateuch, and one, only there; *Methushael*, 'a man of God,' and *Mishael*, the same as Michael, 'Who is like God?' lit. 'Who is what God is?' Probably it occurs also in the Pentateuch in the ordinary language. Perhaps it is used more in the dialect of North Palestine. It is frequently used in the Song of Solomon. In Ecclesiastes it occurs sixty-six times. Of books which are really later, it does not occur in Jeremiah's prophecies, Ezekiel, Daniel, or any of the six later of the minor prophets, nor in Nehemiah or Esther. It occurs only once in Ezra, and twice in the first Book of Chronicles, whereas it occurs four times in the Judges, and once in the Kings, and once probably in Job.

7. "*Manah*, 'appoint, or prepare,' occurs in a Psalm of David.

8. "*Taam*, 'decree.' This is a Syriac word, and accordingly, since it has now been ascertained beyond all question, that the language of Nineveh was a dialect of Syriac, it was, with a Hebrew pronunciation, the very word used of this decree at Nineveh. The employment of the special word is a part of the same accuracy with which Jonah relates that the decree was issued, not from the king only, but from *the king and his nobles*, one of those minute touches which occur in the writings of those who describe what they have seen.

"Out of the eight words, or forms, three are naval terms, and since Israel was no seafaring people, it is in harmony with the history, that these terms should first occur in the first prophet who left the land of his mission by sea. So it is also, that an Assyrian technical term should first occur in a prophet who had been sent to Nineveh." (Pusey's *Introd. to the Book of Jonah.*)

The writer of the article on Jonah, in Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopædia*, is of the opinion, that the Chaldaisms in the book may be accounted for by the nearness of the Canton of Zebulon, to which Jonah belonged, to the northern territory, whence by national intercourse Aramaic peculiarities might be insensibly borrowed. — C. E.]

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JONAH.

CHAPTER I.

[*The Prophet's Commission to preach against Nineveh, and his Attempt to evade it* (vers. 1–3). *A Violent Storm arises; Alarm of the Sailors: Means adopted for their Safety; Detection of Jonah; he is thrown into the Sea, and is swallowed by a Fish* (vers. 4–16). — C. E.]

1 Now [And] the word of the Lord [Jehovah] came unto [was communicated to]
2 Jonah,[1] the son of Amittai.[2] Arise,[3] go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry [4] [pro-
3 claim] against it; for [5] their wickedness is [has] come up before me. But [And]
Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord [Jehovah], and
went down to Joppa; and he [*omit*, he] found a ship [6] going to Tarshish: so he paid
[and paid] the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish
4 from the presence of the Lord [Jehovah]. But [And] the Lord [Jehovah] sent
out [7] a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty [great] tempest in the sea,
5 so that [and] the ship was like to be broken.[8] Then [And] the mariners [9] were
afraid, and cried every man [each] unto his god, and cast forth the wares [10] that
were in the ship into the sea, to lighten *it* of them.[10] But [And] Jonah was gone
down [had gone down] into the sides [the interior] of the ship;[11] and he lay, and
6 was fast asleep. So [And] the shipmaster [12] came [came near] to him, and said
unto [to] him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon [to] thy God, if
so be that [perhaps] God [13] will think upon us, that we perish not [and we shall
7 not perish]. And they said every one to his fellow [to each other], Come, and
let us cast lots, that we may know [and we shall know] for whose cause [14] [on account of whom] this evil is upon us. So [And] they cast lots, and the lot fell upon
8 Jonah. Then said they [And they said] unto [to] him, Tell us, we pray thee, for
whose cause this evil *is* upon us;[15] What is thine occupation? and whence com-
9 est thou? what is thy country? and of what people *art* thou? And he said unto
[to] them, I *am* an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord [Jehovah], the God of heaven,
10 which [who] hath made [*omit*, hath] the sea and the dry *land*. Then were the
men [And the men were] exceedingly afraid, and said unto [to] him, Why hast
thou done this?[16] [What is this thou hast done?] For the men knew that he
fled [was fleeing] from the presence of the Lord [Jehovah], because he had told
11 them. Then said they [And they said] unto [to] him, What shall we do unto
thee, that the sea may be calm unto us [may subside from against us]? for the sea
wrought and was tempestuous [17] [was increasing and rushing tempestuously].
12 And he said unto [to] them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea, so shall
the sea [And the sea shall] be calm unto you [subside from against you]: for I
13 know that for my sake [18] this great tempest is upon you. Nevertheless [And] the
men rowed [19] [broke through, viz., the waves] hard to bring *it* to the land [to bring
to land]; but they could not, for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous [was in-
14 creasing and rushing tempestuously] against them. Wherefore [And] they cried
unto [to] the Lord [Jehovah], and said, We beseech thee, O Lord [O now Jehovah], let us not perish for this man's life,[20] and lay not upon us innocent blood:
15 for thou, O Lord [Jehovah], hast done as it pleased thee. So [And] they took up
Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased [stood] from its raging.

16 Then [And] the men feared the Lord [Jehovah] exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord [Jehovah], and made vows.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1. — יוֹנָה, Jonah, signifies *a dove*.

[2 Ver. 1. — אֲמִתַּי, Amittai, means *veracious*, or *truthful*.

[3 Ver. 2. — קוּם, *arise*, used before another verb as a term of excitement.

[4 Ver. 2. — קְרָא, *cry*, proclaim in the manner of a herald, or prophet.

[5 Ver. 2. — כִּי, *for*, may be used here as the relative conjunction *that;* but it probably assigns a reason for the command, and hence it is rendered *because*.

[6 Ver. 3. — אֳנִיָּה, *ship*, generally any large merchant-ship.

[7 Ver. 4. — הֵטִיל, Hiphil of טוּל, *to throw down at full length, to prostrate.*

[8 Ver. 4. — חִשְּׁבָה לְהִשָּׁבֵר, used metaphorically of inanimate things; *to be about to do, or suffer: the ship was about to be broken*, was on the point of foundering. Gesenius' *Heb. Lex.* sub חָשַׁב.

[9 Ver. 5. — הַמַּלָּחִים, *the mariners*, from מֶלַח, salt, the quality of the water which they navigate.

[10 Ver. 5. — כֵּלִים, vessels, a general term comprehending wares. The suffix הֶם refers to the persons, not to the wares.

[11 Ver. 5. — יַרְכְּתֵי הַסְּפִינָה, the sides, or two sides of the vessel. *Sephinah* is derived from *Saphan*, to cover: it signifies a decked vessel.

[12 Ver. 6. — רַב הַחֹבֵל, the master of the rope-men.

[13 Ver. 6. — הָאֱלֹהִים, the god, with the article.

[14 Ver. 7. — בְּשֶׁלְּמִי, *for that which is to whom:* compounded of the preposition בְּ, the relative pronoun שֶׁ, contracted from אֲשֶׁר, the preposition לְ, and the interrogative מִי.

[15 Ver. 8. — The words בַּאֲשֶׁר לְמִי הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת לָנוּ, are omitted in two of Kennicott's MSS. in the Soncin. edition of the prophets, and in the Vatican copy of the LXX.: and Kennicott's MS. 154, omits לְמִי. Henderson.

[16 Ver. 10. — מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ, What is this thou hast done! not, why hast thou done this?

[17 Ver. 11. — הוֹלֵךְ, going, סֹעֵר, tossing: they are both participles.

[18 Ver. 12. — בְּשֶׁלִּי, on my account, compounded of the preposition בְּ, the relative שֶׁ, contracted as in v. 7, the preposition לְ, and the pronominal suffix י.

[19 Ver. 13. — וַיַּחְתְּרוּ, broke through. חָתַר signifies to break through a wall, and metaphorically to break through the waves.

[20 Ver. 14. — בְּנֶפֶשׁ, for the sake of the soul, or life, as in 2 Sam. xiv. 7. See also Deut. xix. 21. — C. E.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL

Ver. 1–3. *The Command and the Flight.* Compare on ver. 1 the Introduction, § 2, p. 13.

"The narrative begins, according to usage, with the copula [conjunction *vav.* C. E.], because every event in time follows upon an antecedent one; and the record of that event is always only a continuation of something prior, and separately considered forms a fragment." (Hitzig, Compare Ruth i. 1; 1 Sam. i. 1.)

["From the circumstance that the book commences with the conjunction וְ, commonly rendered *and*, some have inferred that it is merely the fragment of a larger work, written by the same hand; but though this particle is most commonly used to connect the following sentence with something which precedes it, and is placed at the beginning of historical books to mark their connection with a foregoing narrative, as Ex. i. 1; 1 Kings i. 1; Ezra i. 1; yet it is also employed inchoatively where there is no connection whatever, as Ruth i. 1; Esth. i. 1; and, as specially parallel, Ezek. i. 1. It serves no other purpose in such cases than merely to qualify the apocopated future, so as to make it represent the historical past tense." (Henderson, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 1.)

"This form, 'And the word of the Lord came to —, saying,' occurs over and over again, stringing together the pearls of great price of God's revelations, and uniting this new revelation to all those which had preceded it. The word *And*, then joins on histories with histories, revelations with revelations, uniting in one the histories of God's works and words, and blending the books of Holy Scripture into one Divine book." (Pusey, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 1.)

"Sometimes a book commences with the relative past form of the substantive verb, in consequence of the writer's viewing it as the continuation of a preceding one (Lev. i. 1; Num. i. 1; Josh. i. 1; Judg. i. 1). Books are also found to commence in this manner which have no actual reference to a preceding one; in such cases the writer plunges at once *in medias res*, regarding what he is about to record as connected to foregoing events, at least in the order of time (Ezek. i. 1; Jonah i. 1; Ruth i. 1; Esther i. 1). (Nordheimer's *Heb. Gram. Syntax*, § 976, 2). — C. E.]

Ver. 2. Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, on the left bank of the Tigris, is called **the great city,** *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, here as in Gen. x. 12, where the additional clause, "the same is a great city," includes the four previously, separately named cities, which, in a wider sense, constituted the city of Nineveh. It was, according to Diodor. ii. 3, the greatest city of antiquity. Its circumference was four hundred and eighty furlongs — one hundred and fifteen furlongs greater than that of Babylon. Its diameter was (Herodotus, v. 25)[1] [?] one hundred and fifty furlongs; consequently a good day's journey. Upon its walls, 100 feet high, flanked with fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high, four [some say three, C. E.] chariots could drive abreast. The three days' journey, which, according to chap. iii. 3, one could travel within the city, cannot appear an incredible statement, if we consider that it filled, together with the adjoining cities united to it by the same fortifications, the whole space between the rivers Tigris, Khosr, the Upper or Great Zab, the Gasr Su, and the mountainous boundary of the valley of the Tigris on the east; and that the rubbish and ruin covered mounds, which indicate the locality of the desolated city, and which for twenty-five years have been accessible to the investigations of learned men, occupy an area of about eighteen square miles [German miles = 378 Eng. sq. miles — C. E.] Comp. Ewald, *Bib. Jour.*, x. 52 ff.; J. Oppert, *Expéd. Scientifique en Mésopotamie*, Paris, 1862, ii. 67, 72, 82 f.; M. v. Niebuhr, *Hist. of Assyria and Babylon*, p. 274 ff.)

[Nineveh, according to Gen. x. 11, was built by Nimrod. The verse should probably be read: "Out of that land he [Nimrod] went forth into Asshur [Assyria], and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth and Calah." According to the Greek and Roman authors, it was founded by Ninus, the mythical founder of the Assyrian empire; and its name appears to be derived from his, or from that of an Assyrian deity, Nin, corresponding, it is conjectured, with the Greek Hercules. In the time of Jonah, it had probably attained to its greatest extent. It formed a trapezium, and consequently could have no one diameter. Its sharp angles lay towards the north and south, and its long sides were formed by the Tigris and the mountains. The average length was about twenty-five English miles: the average breadth, fifteen. This large extent of area includes Nineveh in its broader sense, which was a union of four large primeval cities. Nineveh proper, including the ruins of Kouyunjik, Nebbi Yunas, and Ninua, is situated at the northwestern corner, near the Tigris. Nimrud, supposed to be the later capital, and which, in the opinion of Rawlinson, Jones, and Oppert, was the ancient Calah, is at the southwestern corner, between the Tigris and Zab; a third large city, which is now without a name, and which has been explored least of all, is on the Tigris itself, from three to six English miles to the north of Nimrud; and the citadel and temple-mass, now named Khorsabad, is situated on the Khosr. (Compare Keil and Delitzsch *on the Minor Prophets; Kitto's Biblical Cyclopedia;* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible;* Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains;* Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, Book I., Appendix, Essay vii.) — C. E.]

Preach against it is God's command to Jonah; that is, go and deliver to its face, a call to repentance [*Eine Busspredigt*]. He does not say, preach merely *concerning* it; for Jonah, as other prophets did, could have done that in his own land. Neither does he say merely *to* it; for that would have been expressed by אֶל or לְ. But God will have him preach *against* Nineveh, because its wickedness had come up before Him as in former times the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah had done (comp. Gen. xviii. 21, with Gen. vi. 5).

Ver. 3. Jonah arose, but **to flee,** and that from the presence of Jehovah, that is, from the people and land of Israel, to which he imagined the presence of God to be limited, as Jacob, when he was astonished at discovering the presence of God beyond the home of his father [*Väterlichen Erde*]. (Gen. xxviii. 16.)

["The belief in the omnipresence of God was a part of the faith of Abraham's house. And that God was even present here he did not first learn on this occasion (as Knobel seems to think), but it is new to him that Jehovah, as the covenant God, revealed Himself not only at the consecrated altars of his fathers, but even here." (Lange on Gen. xxviii. 16.)

"It has been asked, 'How could a *Prophet* imagine that he could flee from the presence of God?' Plainly he could not. Jonah, so conversant with the Psalms, doubtless knew well the Psalm of David, 'Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence?' He could not but know, what every instructed Israelite knew. And so critics should have known that such could *not* be the meaning. The words are used, as we say, 'he went out of the king's presence,' or the like. It is, literally, he rose to flee from being in the presence of the Lord, *i. e.*, from standing in his presence as his servant and minister." (*Introduction to the Prophet Jonah*, by the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D. D., p. 247.)

Dr. Pusey illustrates his interpretation by a large number of references to the use of the expression מִלִּפְנֵי, in the notes to the passage quoted above. The explanation of Keil and Delitzsch (*Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 3) is essentially the same: "from the face of Jehovah, *i. e.*, away from the presence of the Lord, out of the land of Israel, where Jehovah dwelt in the temple, and manifested his presence (comp. Gen. iv. 16); not to hide himself from the omnipresent God, but to withdraw from the service of Jehovah, the God-King of Israel."

Henderson (*Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 3), says: "פְּנֵי יְהוָה, which strictly means the *face, person*, or *presence of Jehovah*, is sometimes employed to denote the special manifestation of his presence, or certain outward and visible tokens by which He made Himself locally known. Thus God promised that *his presence* (פָּנַי), *i. e.*, the sensible tokens of his presence, should accompany the Hebrews on their march to Canaan (Ex. xxxiii. 14. Comp. Ps. ix. 3; lxviii. 2, 8). It is also employed in reference to the *place* or *region* where such manifestations were vouchsafed, as Gen. iv. 14, where it obviously signifies the spot where the primitive worship was celebrated, and sensible proofs of the divine favor were manifested to the worshippers (1 Sam. i. 22; ii. 18; Ps. xlii. 3 (2)). In like manner, the place where Jacob had intimate communion with God, was called by that patriarch פְּנִיאֵל, the *face*, or *manifestation of God* (Gen. xxxii. 30). The interpretation, therefore, of David Kimchi, "He imagined that if he went out of the land of Israel, the spirit of prophecy would not

1 [Herodotus mentions Nineveh, Book I. 103, 106, 185, 193; Book II. 150. — C. E.]

rest upon him," is perhaps not wide of the mark. Jarchi to the same effect: "The Shekinah does not dwell out of the land." Though, as Theodoret observes, he well knew that the Lord of the universe was everywhere present, yet he supposed that it was only at Jerusalem he became apparent to men; ὑπολαμβάνων δὲ ὅμως ἐν μόνῃ Ἱερουσαλὴμ αὐτὸν ποιεῖσθαι τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν." — C. E.]

The psychological motive of the flight is not mentioned. That which Jonah assigns (chap. iv. 2), is hardly to be considered with Keil[1] as pragmatically exact and sufficient, since in that place it rather makes the impression of being an attempt to palliate a guilty conscience, which is glad to seize upon even the semblance of right. His concern for the time being, was to throw off obedience to God, and for that purpose various motives — ease, indolence, and fear of men — concurred, — a state of mind of which every servant of God can readily conceive from the analogy of his own experience. That he actually intended an entire abandonment of duty, the circumstance that he fled as far as possible proves.

To Tarshish, or *Tartessus*,[2] which was the most remote of the Phœnician trading-places known in the Old Testament, and situated not far from the mouth of the Bætis (Guadalquivir). He takes the direct road thither, first to Joppa, which, in the time of Solomon (2 Chron. ii. 16), was a well-known seaport on the Mediterranean (Josh. xix. 46), for the purpose of there embarking in a ship, whose appointed fare (שְׂכָרָהּ) he paid.

Ver. 4–16. *God arrests Jonah.* Jehovah, from whom Jonah intends to flee, is Lord of the sea, and the winds are his servants (Ps. civ. 4). One of these servants he sends forth in haste into the sea to draw Jonah from his purpose.

Ver. 5. The sailors, heathen from different nations, do what behooves honest and prudent men: they pray and resort to the usual precautionary measures, by throwing the wares into the sea, in order to unburden themselves of them. (מֵעֲלֵיהֶם does not refer to the wares, but to the ship's company (Ex. xviii. 22).) But he, whom the storm particularly concerns, deems himself secure **in the sides of the ship**, *i. e.*, in the hold (comp. Am. vi. 10; Is. xiv. 15). There he is fast asleep. "*Tam quietus est et animi tranquilli, ut ad navis interiora descendens somno placido perfruatur.*" (Hieronymus.) The verbs in the last sentence of the verse should be rendered in the pluperfect, as in the last clause of verse 10. ["Jonah had gone down into the hold, and had there fallen fast asleep."— C. E.]

[This act of Jonah is regarded by most commentators as a sign of an evil conscience. Marck supposes that he had lain down to sleep, hoping the better to escape either the dangers of sea and air, or the hand of God; others that he had thrown himself down in despair, and being utterly exhausted and giving himself up for lost, had fallen asleep; or as Theodoret expresses it, being troubled with the gnawings of conscience and overpowered with mourning, he had sought comfort in sleep and fallen into a deep sleep. Jerome, on the other hand, expresses the idea that the words indicate "security of mind" on the part of the prophet "he is not disturbed by the storm and the surrounding dangers, but has the same composed mind in the calm, or with shipwreck at hand;" and whilst the rest are calling upon their gods, and casting their things overboard, "he is so calm and feels so safe with his tranquil mind, that he goes down to the interior of the ship and enjoys a most placid sleep." The truth probably lies between these two views. It was not an evil conscience, or despair occasioned by the threatening of danger, which induced him to lie down to sleep; nor was it his fearless composure in the midst of the danger of the storm, but the careless self-security with which he had embarked on the ship to flee from God, without considering that the hand of God could reach him even on the sea, and punish him for his disobedience. This security is apparent in his subsequent conduct." (Keil and Delitzsch, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 5).

Pusey and Cowles intimate that he may have been fatigued by his journey to Joppa, and that "sorrow and remorse completed what fatigue began." — C. E.]

Ver. 6. But God knows where to find each one (comp. Am. ix. 2). The captain [חֹבֵל collect.] came to him and said: **What meanest thou, O sleeper?** Hieronymus: "*Quid tu sopore deprimeris? Vox stupentis et acriter redarguentis, ac si dixisset: quænam est tibi tanti soporis causa et ratio et excusatio? cum procella somnum omnem satis interdicat et vigilium exigat periculum?*" — Marck.

Arise, pray to thy God. Perhaps God[3] will think upon us, think mercifully that we perish not (compare the derivatives of the root עשׁת (Job xii. 5; Ps. cxlvi. 4). The heathen is obliged to admonish the servant of God of his duty, and to remind him of the fact that his God is a merciful God.

[Pusey quotes from Chrysostom the following passage: "The ship-master knew from experience, that it was no common storm, that the surges were an infliction borne down from God, and above human skill, and that there was no good in the master's skill. For the state of things needed another

1 ["The motive of his flight was not fear of the difficulty of carrying out the command of God, but, as Jonah himself says in chap. iv. 2, anxiety lest the compassion of God should spare the sinful city in the event of its repenting. He had no wish to coöperate in this; and that not merely because 'he knew by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the repentance of the Gentiles would be the ruin of the Jews, and as a lover of his country, was actuated not so much by envy of the salvation of Nineveh, as by unwillingness that his own people should perish,' as Jerome supposes, but also because he really grudged salvation to the Gentiles and feared lest their conversion to the living God should infringe upon the privileges of Israel above the Gentile world, and put an end to its election as the nation of God." (Keil and Delitzsch, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 3, and note at the bottom of the page.) — C. E.]

2 [Calvin is of the opinion that Tarshish means Cilicia, the principal city of which was Tarsus, the native place of the Apostle Paul. But it is now generally agreed that it was Tarshish in Spain. The name occurs in Gen. x 4, among the sons of Javan, who are supposed to have peopled the southern parts of Europe (comp. Ps. lxxii. 10; Is. lxvi. 19). In Ezekiel xxvii. 12, and Jeremiah x. 9, it is mentioned as sending to Tyre silver, iron, tin, and lead. It is mentioned in Isaiah, chap. xxiii. in connection with Tyre. In several passages of the Bible, "ships of Tarshish" are spoken of, especially in connection with Tyre. The name is probably of Phœnician origin. — C. E.]

3 [The Hebrew is הָאֱלֹהִים, the God. The German retains the article, *Der Gott.* Pusey: "He does not call Jonah's God, thy God, as Darius says to Daniel, thy God, but also *the God*, acknowledging the God whom Jonah worshipped to be the God." — C. E.]

Master, who ordereth the heavens, and craved the guidance from on high. So then they too left oars, sails, cables, gave their hands rest from rowing, and stretched them to heaven and called upon God." — C. E.]

Ver. 7. But God intends to make a complete exposure of Jonah. [Luther fills up, in an ingenious way, the break in the continuity of thought between vers. 6 and 7. On a momentary survey of the evil, which he had caused, Jonah was filled with such a pungent feeling of repentance and confusion, that he is speechless from deep compunction, and does not, because of shame, find courage to make an open confession, because he considers the disgrace intolerable. Therefore God must suffer still something more to come to pass, in order to drive him to confession.][1] The lot falls upon him. "*Fugitivus hic sorte deprehenditur, non viribus sortium, sed voluntate ejus, qui sortes regebat incertas*" (Hieronymus.) [The fugitive is detected by lot, not from any virtue in lots themselves, but by the will of Him, who governs uncertain lots.]

Ver. 8. His own confession must convict him, that he intended to flee from a God, of whose wide, unlimited power he could not be ignorant (Matt. xii. 37).

["When Jonah had been singled out by lot as the culprit, the sailors called upon him to confess his guilt, asking him at the same time about his country, his occupation, and his parentage. The repetition of the question, on whose account this calamity had befallen them, which is omitted in the LXX. (Vatican), the Soncin. prophets, and Cod. 195 of Kennicott, is found in the margin in Cod. 384, and is regarded by Grimm and Hitzig as a marginal gloss that has crept into the text. It is not superfluous, however, still less does it occasion any confusion; on the contrary, it is quite in order. The sailors wanted thereby to induce Jonah to confess with his own mouth that he was guilty, now that the lot had fallen upon him, and to disclose his crime (Ros. and others). As an indirect appeal to confess his crime, it prepares the way for the further inquiries as to his occupation, etc. They inquired about his occupation, because it might be a disreputable one, and one which excited the wrath of the gods; also about his parentage, and especially about the land and people from which he sprang, that they might pronounce a safe sentence upon his crime" (Keil and Delitzsch, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 8).

"Questions so thronged have been admired in human poetry," St. Jerome says. For it is true to nature. They think that some one of them will draw forth the answer which they wish. It may be that they thought that his country, or people, or parents, were under the displeasure of God. But perhaps more naturally, they wished to "know all about him," as men say. These questions must have gone home to Jonah's conscience. **What is thy business?** The office of prophet which he had left. **Whence comest thou?** From standing before God as his minister. **What thy country, of what people art thou?** The people of God, whom he had quitted for heathen; not to win them to God, as He commanded; but not knowing what they did, to abet him in his flight.

Ver. 9. "Jonah answers the central point to which all these questions tended: 'I am a Hebrew.' This was the name by which Israel was known to foreigners. It is used in the Old Testament, only when they are spoken of by foreigners, or speak of themselves to foreigners, or when the sacred writers mention them in contrast with foreigners." (Pusey, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 8, 9.)

"He does not say a Jew, as the Targum wrongly renders it; for that would have been false, since he was of the tribe of Zebulun, which was in the kingdom of Israel, and not of Judah; nor does he say an Israelite, lest he should be thought to be in the idolatry of that people, but a Hebrew, which was common to both" (Dr. Gill, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 9).

And I fear Jehovah, the God of heaven, which made the sea and dry land. יָרֵא has been rendered correctly by the LXX. *σέβομαι, colo, revereor*; and does not mean "I am afraid of Jehovah against whom I have sinned" (Abarbanel). By the statement, "I fear," etc., he had no intention of describing himself as a righteous or innocent man (Hitzig), but simply meant to indicate his relation to God, — namely, that he adored the living God who created the whole earth, and, as Creator, governed the world. For he admits directly after, that he has sinned against this God, by telling them, as we may see from ver. 10, of his flight from Jehovah. He had not told them as soon as he embarked in the ship, as Hitzig supposes, but does so now for the first time, when they ask about his people, his country, etc., as we may see most unmistakably from ver. 10, b. In ver. 9, Jonah's statement is not given completely; but the principal fact, namely, that he was a Hebrew and worshipped Jehovah, is followed immediately by the account of the impression which this acknowledgment made upon the heathen sailors; and the confession of his sin is mentioned afterwards as a supplement, to assign the reason for the great fear which came upon the sailors in consequence." (Keil and Delitzsch, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 9.) — C. E.]

Ver. 10. The heathen perceive the bearing and extent of this confession. Danger teaches to take heed to the word (Is. xxviii. 19). [See the Hebrew and Luther's German translation of Is. xxviii. 19. — C. E.] Great fear of the great God, who pursues them closely [is at their heels] seizes upon them. The second half of the verse is an explanatory clause added by the narrator, from which it is evident that the reply of Jonah (ver. 9), does not give the exact words that he uttered, but only their substance in condensed form. Indeed, if the question (10, a), is admitted to be intelligible, he must have told them of his flight.

[**What hast thou done!** מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ, is not a question as to the nature of his sin, but an exclamation of horror at his flight from Jehovah, the God of heaven and earth, as the following explanatory clauses, כִּי יָדְעוּ וגו, clearly show. The great fear which came upon the heathen seamen at this confession of Jonah, may be fully explained from the dangerous situation in which they found themselves, since the storm preached the omnipotence of God more powerfully than words could possibly do." (Keil and Delitsch, *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 10.) — C. E.]

Ver. 11. Still more evident is it from this verse that Jonah must have told them that he was a servant of God consecrated by a special call; for they do not cast him into the sea immediately, but apply to him with a kind of awe for instructions what to do. Moreover, afterward (vers. 13, 14), they exert themselves most strenuously to bring him to

1 [Though it does not appear that Jonah confessed his sin to the captain of the ship, yet there is no reason to doubt that he obeyed the awakening call (ver. 6). — C. E.]

land, to preserve his life for the execution of his divine commission; and only when they do not succeed, do they throw him into the sea.[1]

The participle הֹלֵךְ, ver. 11, frequently stands as an auxiliary verb, with the idea of continuance, increase: **the sea continued to rage** (2 Sam. iii. 1; xv. 12).

Ver. 12. Jonah pronounces his own sentence. "*Non tergiversatur, non dissimulat, non negat, sed qui confessus erat de fuga pœnam libenter assumit se cupiens perire ne propter se et ceteri pereant.*" (Hieronymus.) [He does not refuse, or prevaricate, or deny; but having made confession concerning his flight, he willingly submits to the punishment, desiring to perish, and not [to] let others perish on his account.] With the same resignation, with which the prophets are accustomed to announce the sad fate of their nation, he utters his own sentence as a divine oracle, and joins with the tone of prophecy the promise of deliverance.

Ver. 13. The holier he seems to the men, the greater is their dread of putting him to death. Will not God have mercy upon them, if they restore him again to the mission, from which he was intending to escape, if they put him on shore? **They row hard** [וַיַּחְתְּרוּ, literally, **broke through**, namely, the surging waves] to bring the ship to dry land; Cyrill: προσκεῖλαι τὴν ναῦν: the object can be omitted as being easily understood, a usage common to the German.[2] But they do not succeed. It must be evident to them that the word of the prophet must indeed be accomplished. He is a servant [*Mann*] of Jehovah, whom they are about to sacrifice; therefore it is natural that they should pray, not to their own gods, but to Jehovah to pardon them because of the victim.

Ver. 14. — **O Jehovah, we beseech thee, let us not perish for the sake of the soul of this man.** אָנָּה has not arisen from אַל־נָא (Keil), whereby a useless accumulation of synonymous words would arise, but it is the usual particle of entreaty, contracted from אָהּ־נָא,[3] which is just as readily joined with positive requests (2 Kings xx. 3). The בְּ pretii [the beth of price, reward, exchange. — C. E.] stands here as in Micah i. 5. The added petition, **impute not to us innocent blood,** does not mean, suffer us not to destroy in this man an innocent person (Hitzig); but אַל נתן has the meaning of imputation and retribution. Against them Jonah had done no wrong; with respect to them he is guiltless; and in his mission as a prophet, he stands or falls to his God alone: this they feel; no worldly power has a right to pass sentence upon the prophet of God (Jer. xxvi. 19). [נָקִיא is irregularly written with א, as in Joel iv. 19.] But God showed them that they must serve Him as his executioners. **For thou, O Jehovah, hast done as it pleased thee.** Thou hast determined it. This is their justification. The lot and the word of the prophet are to them the finger of God.

Ver. 15. The prediction of the prophet is fulfilled. **The sea stood still [ceased] from its raging.**

Ver. 16. The result of the fulfilled prophecy is that the fear of God on the part of the heathen manifests itself in action: they offer a sacrifice and make vows, — the sacrifice immediately, the vows for the time of landing.

[According to the Rabbins, Grotius, and some others, they did not actually offer a sacrifice, but only purposed to do it before Jehovah, *i. e.*, at Jerusalem; but it is more natural to conclude that they sacrificed some animal that was on board, and vowed that they would present greater proofs of their gratitude when they returned from their voyage. Michaelis thinks they intended to perform their vows when they reached Spain.

"*Quin: ubi transmissæ steterint trans æquora classes;*
Et positis aris jam vota in litore solves." — *Æneid* iii. 403.

Henderson's *Com. on Jonah*, chap. i. 16. — C. E.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.[4]

See Introduction iii. p. 16.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

There is no escape from the Almighty God. For (1.) He has so arranged the world, that the work of every individual is counted upon; and his work is not allowed to stand still, but must be accomplished. Ver. 1, 2. (2.) Distance is no protection against Him; for to Him belong heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land. Ver. 3, f. 9. (3.) To Him the winds and waves are subject; for He has made all things.—Ver. 4, 9. (4.) To Him also are subject everywhere, in involuntary fear, the erring hearts of men (ver. 5, 6); whoever, then, expects to find in them a refuge against God, is deceived. (5.) Even things seemingly accidental must obey Him, whenever He intends to carry out his purpose.—Ver. 7. (6.) Everything, however far from, or near to Him it may be, must finally become an instrument in his hand (ver. 11-15), and coöperate for the glorifying of his name. Ver. 16.

Ver. 1. Whoever would speak the word of God to others, must have received it himself. For the office of the ministry a regular call is requisite.—Ver. 2. Let no man say, that there is, or can be anywhere, a sphere of life so distant, that God can entirely lose sight of it. The Lord has always an eye and a heart for those also, who are without. And he who would be his servant and has not such a heart, is a servant like Jonah, that is, an undutiful one. The sins of Nineveh are not specified. The savage desire for wars and thirst for conquest, which characterized the Assyrians, were certainly sins enough before God; yet there may have been others. God's call to repentance is always a call of grace; his call of grace always a call to repentance. Jonah and Paul, Rom. i. 5.—Ver. 3. What God appoints to thee to do, do it without gainsaying. He who gives the burden gives also the shoulders to bear it. He who flees increases the burden. He who flees from God is foolish and commits folly. Jonah must

1 [Perhaps it is too much to assume that the strenuous efforts of the sailors were put forth principally to effect the landing of the fugitive prophet; they had regard to their own safety, as the casting of Jonah into the sea proves. — C. E.]

2 [The literal translation of the Hebrew is, "They rowed hard to bring to the dry land." The object of the verb rendered to bring, namely, ship, is omitted. — C. E.]

3 [See Henderson's *Com. on Jonah*, i. 14, and Gesenius' *Hebrew Lexicon*, s. v. — C. E.]

4 [For the heading of this part of the *Commentary*, Kleinert has chosen the compound word *Reichsgedanken*, which means thoughts connected with the history and development of the kingdom of God. His reasons for choosing this term in preference to *dogmatisch-ethische Grundgedanken* are given in the Preface, pp. vi., vii. — C. E.]

have known in his heart that it is impossible to escape from God (ver. 9). It so happens that if, regardless of Divine direction, we take our own course, we will afterward be obliged to acknowledge ourselves blind and foolish. — Ver. 4. Had the Book of Jonah originated from heathen fables, as some assert, the Lord would not have sent the wind upon the sea; but the god of heaven [Jupiter] would have made an alliance with the god of the winds [Æolus] and with the god of the sea [Neptune] against Jonah. How simple and sublime is the religion of the Old Testament! Distress teaches to pray. If thou dost not know and teach this, thou wilt always be a poor comforter. If the Lord seizes thy heart with violent alarms from anguish of conscience, throw thy wares into the sea. What is thine must perish, and if thou dost not surrender it, thou must thyself suffer shipwreck. — Ver. 6. It is a sad thing and a bad sign, if the unbelieving, and those in the congregation weak in faith, must tell the minister what becomes him to do. Happy he whose conscience is awakened and quickened by an admonition so shameful to him. Of whom the Lord thinks, him He also helps (Ps. xl. 17 (17)). It often occurs that the Lord must say: Verily, I have not found such faith in Israel. — Ver. 7. Human means to learn the will of God, in doubtful cases, are in themselves of no avail; but God can make use of them, if there is true earnestness in those who employ them, and if they know no better means (comp. Josh. 7). But when men, by means of prayer, can receive the Holy Spirit, then they should seek the will of God, not by lots, but by prayer (Matt. vii. 11). — Ver. 8. Jonah might purposely have left his birth and vocation in darkness. Whoever engages in his calling with half a soul, likes to avoid confession; he suffers himself to be considered as a heathen, and puts himself on a level with this world. Where the fear of God is not, there is the fear of man. And moreover, the fear of man is most unprofitable. Whoever frankly and honestly, humbly and heartily, acknowledges the Lord among men, will soon discover that it is the phantom offspring of fear to imagine that one will reap from the acknowledgment only disgrace and not a blessing. Such was not even the case among the heathen; for when Jonah made his confession, they honored him (ver. 10–14). Reflect how many souls may be guided by the Lord to thee, to whom, by confession at proper time, thou mayest have it in thy power to render a service for eternity. The commission [of the minister] is not confined to Jerusalem and Bethel, not to the baptismal font and altar, not to the confessional and pulpit, not to canonicals; but it is in thy heart and mouth, and it shall, therefore, never depart from thee (Deut. xxx. 14). — Ver. 13. So has the heathen world also struggled to come to land; but it could not until Christ was buried in death (Rom. i.–iii.). — Ver. 15. There are deeds of violence by which God's will is carried into effect. But it does not, therefore, follow that he who performs them is guiltless; but he stands in need of repentance and forgiveness. — Vers. 15, 16. This is also a shadow of things to come. O, that it were only come to this, — that all the heathen world would thank God, that death, which swallowed up Christ, has no more power over us.

Luther: Thus God is wont, when his great wrath is at hand, to send his word before and save some. We have now the same grace and great light of the Divine word; therefore it is certain that a great destruction is near; since God intends to rescue some before it comes. — Ver. 2. We regard the history with indifference, because we view it from without, and it does not concern us. But should the like occur in our time, we would think that we never yet heard of a more foolish and more impossible thing, than that a single man should enter such an empire, with a proclamation to repent. Now God's works are wont to appear, at first, so foolish and impossible, that reason must despair of their accomplishment and scoff; but it is well for us to believe, for God accomplishes them. — Ver. 3. The ancient holy fathers were especially inclined to exculpate the prophets, apostles, and great saints. But we adhere strictly and inflexibly to the Word of God, and admit that Jonah, in this instance, committed a great sin, on account of which he would have been eternally condemned, had he not, in the number of the elect, been written in the book of life. This is a signal token of grace that God seeks Jonah and punishes him so soon after his sin, and does not suffer him to profit by it, or to continue long therein. — Ver. 5. The natural light of reason extends thus far, that it considers God kind, gracious, merciful, and mild. This is a great light; but it fails in two particulars. In the first place, it believes indeed that God has power and knowledge to do, to help, and to give; but that He is willing also to do such things for it, it knows not; therefore it does not continue steadfast in its opinion. In the second place, reason cannot correctly bestow the predicate of Deity upon that being to whom it belongs. It knows that God is; but who and what He is, who has a right to be called God, it knows not. Each one called upon his god, that is, upon the object of his fancy, or that which he considered God; therefore, they were all in error in regard to the only true God. — Ver. 7. Where men devoid of understanding are, they set about things in a wrong, perverted way, allow the sin to remain in the mean time, and consider only how they may get rid of their anguish. This does not help: they must consequently despair. But where men of understanding are, they turn away their minds from their anguish and think mostly of their sins; they confess them and get rid of them, though they should remain eternally in anguish, and they resign themselves to it, as Jonah does here. — Ver. 10 ff. The faith of Jonah against trials (for that he maintained his faith his deliverance proves): (1.) He takes the sin upon himself from others, and acknowledges that he alone deserved death. (2.) He consents also to be brought to shame before God. (3.) He chooses death, bitter and uncertain. If God so deal with us as to permit us to see life in death, or if He show us the place and abode of our souls, whither they must go and where they must remain, then death would not be bitter, but it would be like a leap over a shallow stream, on both sides of which one feels and sees a firm ground and shore. But now He does not show us here anything of the kind, but we must spring from the firm shore of this life into the abyss. (4.) He bears in death the wrath of God. (5.) More than this, he must die alone; he has none to comfort him; the people in the ship sail away and leave him in the midst of the sea as certainly drowned and lost. (6.) To die simply is not enough: he must yet enter the jaws of the fish.

Starke: Ver. 1. Jonah came out of Galilee: that was, therefore, a false declaration of the Pharisees (John vii. 52). From this, one sees how pernicious are all deep-rooted prejudices. Whoever will rightly exercise the office of the ministry must

indeed be a Jonah, which, translated into English, signifies a dove. He must cherish the simplicity of the dove (Matt. x. 16). — Ver. 2. He must also not love ease, but cheerfully and willingly take upon himself toil and hardship. The greater cities are, the greater are their sins. God bears for a long time, and finds with him no unconditional decree for the destruction of the great majority and the election of a small minority. — Ver. 3. To rest on the divine will places man in the highest tranquillity. Him who forsakes God and duty, God, on the other hand, forsakes with his grace and assistance. — Ver. 4. If we follow our carnal nature [*Fleisch und Blut*], it will bring us into much company improper for us. It is no small act of kindness, if He punish the sinner severely soon after the commission of his sin. On account of the sin of one man many others often fall into great distress. — Ver. 5. It is very proper, in danger, to make use of natural means for preservation. — Ver. 6. Even the heathen acknowledged the power of prayer: it is a shame, if many among Christians should doubt it. — Ver. 7. So also they acknowledged that there is a God, who rules over the human race, exercises the office of Judge among men, and, in consequence of this, brings the guilty to just punishment. — God has many ways of bringing our sins to light before his face (Ps. xc. 8). — Ver. 8. None should be condemned without trial. Even the law of nature grants to each one the right of defense. Just as it is a duty and necessity readily and willingly to hear those who bring us to account for our life and conduct, so also ought each Christian, as often as he is accused by his conscience and brought, as it were, before court, to consider the charges of conscience, confess his wrong, and reform. — Ver. 9. There is nothing so secret [*so fein gesponnen*, so finely spun], that it shall not finally come to light (Luke viii. 17). Confession of our sins should also be made, that God may be honored and glorified, and that the ignorant and unbelieving may be better instructed. — Ver. 10. The fact that the heathen had heard from Jonah, how God held the Ninevites in abhorrence, and would destroy the whole city, with its inhabitants, if they did not repent, may have contributed (for each one could easily make the application to himself) not a little to their fear, which was merely slavish. God never does evil to the sinner, but always good. He also intends all his dealings with him for good. That which delights the sinner is not a true good, but an imaginary shadow: it is not genuine pleasure, but pure disgust [*Unlust*]. Why then does he sin? God knows how to propagate the true religion miraculously. — Ver. 11. In important matters one should undertake nothing without the advice of honest teachers. — Ver. 12. It is the nature of love not to seek its own, but rather to suffer harm than to bring others into it; rather to lose its life than to suffer the lives of the innocent to be endangered (John iii. 16). — No one should take away his own life, though he may have forfeited it. — Ver. 13. Against the divine will no human toil nor labor can prevail. — Ver. 14. Though in divine chastisements it is one's duty to subordinate one's will to the divine, yet one ought not, on that account, to cease to call upon God for the removal and mitigation of the chastisement. — Ver. 15. He who has God for his enemy has all nature for his enemy; but to him who has God for his friend, all creatures bear good will. When God has executed his just sentence, then everything is again at peace. — Ver. 16. God permits nothing so evil to come to pass, but that He knows to bring some good out of it; for his counsels are wonderful and He carries them out gloriously. Men should apply divine judgments upon others for the purpose of bringing themselves to a saving knowledge of God.

Pfaff: Ver. 2. Great cities, great sins, great judgments; but so much the greater necessity that they be warned by the prophets of the Lord and rebuked by them. — Ver. 3. Teacher and preacher must not shun the cross, otherwise they forsake the Lord. Thou also, my soul, must follow the call of God, though He lead thee in the paths of extreme suffering [*Kreuzeswege*]; and thou must not seek to escape from this call. — Ver. 5. Tribulation drives to God, and that is the greatest blessing, which lies hidden in the cross. — Ver. 10 ff. A single person can often bring a great calamity and the punishment of God upon a community. Therefore, it is necessary that the authorities watch and punish and remove offenses. We have good reason to entreat God that He will not punish the whole land on account of the ungodly.

Quandt: The book of Jonah is the missionary book of the Old Testament.—Ver. 3. There is in the conduct of Jonah a twofold sin, — disobedience to God and flight from God. Even Christians defy their God from dread of disgrace. Errors of the heart draw after them errors of the understanding: from religious perversity spring erroneous opinions. Flight from God is also in our time a widespread folly. — Ver. 5. Even the sleep of Jonah belongs to his flight. Judas fled still farther, when he hanged himself. — Ver. 6. The children of the world have always a feeling that the God of the pious [Christians] is more powerful than what they, in their delusion, reverence and worship. — Ver. 8. It is not to be overlooked that Jonah first mentions the sea. The words of Jonah are not so much a confession of faith as a confession of repentance. — Ver. 10 ff. When the orator, Cyprian, read the history of the prophet overwhelmed by the waves, his soul was violently agitated: it became a means of his conversion; and the result was that he became an eminent teacher of the church.

F. Lambert: Ver. 1. It gives to us miserable sinners great confidence in God that He received, among his servants, David, Jonah, Peter, Paul, and others, notwithstanding they sinned notoriously.

Rieger: Ver. 2. Of such as, in their declension, have wandered still farther from God, it is said, "their sins have come up before me; I have heard the cry of them," etc. But of them who have intimate communion with God, or in the midst of whom the Lord Jesus still walks, it is said, "I know thy works." — Ver. 3. He who has become sensible of his deficiencies, will consider the foolishness of God wiser than all human wisdom, from the fact that, in his word, instead of many notable works, which He might have mentioned as having been achieved by many of his servants, He rather exposes their weaknesses and failings; because not merely brilliant and great examples are necessary for our imitation; but also examples for our encouragement, that we may rouse ourselves from the thoughtlessness of sin, seek forgiveness, and seize the hand of God extended for our recovery. From the circumstance that Jonah immediately found a ship, according to his wish, he obstinately persists in his purpose. But even to a flight undertaken in disobedience, everything in external circumstances may accommodate itself.

If a man is in the right way, it must be determined by other indications [than favoring external circumstances. — C. E.]

HIERONYMUS: Ver. 4. Great is he who flees in this instance; but still greater is He who pursues him.

SCHMIEDER: Ver. 5. Jonah is in a quiet, concealed corner of the ship. He shunned the light.

AUGUSTINE: Ver. 9. *Si homo velat, Deus revelat. Si homo tegit, Deus detegit. Si homo agnoscit, Deus ignoscit.*

RIEGER: Ver. 10 ff. The entire connection of events revealed God's just displeasure at the flight of Jonah; but at the same time it must have prepared him for the future courageous execution of his mission. For the fact that Jonah found such abundant evidence that a deep impression of the fear of God had been produced in the consciences of these strange people, and that great earnestness in calling upon God had been awakened in them, must have been adapted to prepare him to undertake, with less reluctance, the commission to preach against a strange city. The godly sorrow and repentance, which Jonah experienced, produced in him also the legitimate revenge (2 Cor. vii. 11), for he said: take me and cast me into the sea. Yet he does not throw himself into the sea. Such a difference is found between an awakened and a despairing conscience.

SCHLIER: Ver. 15. He chose the sea for himself instead of going to Nineveh: the sea detained him by the hand of the Lord: the sea was the place into which the hand of the Lord plunged him for punishment.

SCHMIEDER: Ver. 16. This was not a genuine conversion to God; had it been, they would have abandoned forever the worship of all other gods beside Jehovah, and not merely honored Him, together with their gods, with offerings.

[CALVIN: Ver. 2. *Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it.* God designed in this way to try Jonah, whether he would prefer his command to all the hindrances of the world. And it is a genuine proof of obedience, when we simply obey God, however numerous the obstacles which may meet us and may be suggested to our minds, and though no escape may appear to us; yea, when we follow God, as it were, with closed eyes, wherever He may lead us, and doubt not but that He will add strength to us, and stretch forth also His hand, whenever need may require, to remove all our difficulties. — Ver. 3. All flee away from the presence of God, who do not willingly obey his commandments. — Ver. 4. Though the Lord may involve many men in the same punishment, when He especially intends to pursue only one man, yet there is never wanting a reason why He might not call before his tribunal any one of us, even such as appear the most innocent. — Ver. 5. Hardly any religion appears in the world, when God leaves us in an undisturbed condition.

This passage teaches, that men are constrained by necessity to seek God; so also, on the other hand, it shows that men go astray in seeking God, except they are directed by celestial truth, and also by the Spirit of God.

MARCKIUS:[1] Ver. 3 God not only suffers the wicked to advance prosperously in their sins, but does not immediately restore the godly in their declensions; nay, He gives them every facility for a time in their downward course, in order that they may know themselves more, and that the glory of God may become thereby more manifest. Foolish then is the sinner, who, having begun life prosperously, concludes that the end will be equally happy. — Ver. 6. We see in this instance the great danger in which unconscious sinners are often involved, that the solace sought by them departs from them, that a dead sleep remains, and even increases under God's judgment, and that in the performance of duty the godly are sometimes more slothful than the ungodly.

The servants of God are sometimes surpassed, reproved, and stimulated, by those far below them, yea, even by brute animals: a salutary admonition, from whatever quarter it may come, ought never to be despised.

MATTHEW HENRY: Ver. 3. Providence seemed to favor his design, and gave him an opportunity to escape: we may be out of the way of duty, and yet may meet with a favorable gale. The ready way is not always the right way. — Ver 6. If the professors of religion do an ill thing, they may expect to hear of it from those who make no such profession.

PUSEY: Ver. 5. God, *whom they ignorantly worshipped,* while, they cried to the gods, who, they thought, disposed of them, heard them. They escaped with the loss of their wares, but God saved their lives and revealed Himself to them. God hears ignorant prayer, when ignorance is not willful and sin.

A heathen ship was a strange place for a prophet of God, not *as* a prophet, but as a fugitive; and so, probably, ashamed of what he had completed, he had withdrawn from sight and notice. He did not embolden himself in his sin, but shrank into himself. The conscience most commonly awakes when the sin is done. It stands aghast at itself; but Satan, if he can, cuts off its retreat. Jonah had no retreat now, unless God had made one. — C. E.]

1 [These extracts from Marckius are taken from the notes appended to Calvin's *Commentary on Jonah.* — C. E.]

CHAPTER II.

[*Jonah's Hymn of Thanksgiving and Praise for his Deliverance from the Bowels of the Fish.* — C. E.]

1 Now [And] the Lord [Jehovah] had prepared[1] [appointed] a great fish to swallow
up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.
2 And Jonah prayed to Jehovah his God from the bowels of the fish and said,
3 I cried to Jehovah out of my distress:
And He answered me:
Out of the womb of Sheol[2] I cried:
Thou heardest my voice.
4 Thou castedst me into the deep,[3]
Into the heart of the seas;
And the stream[4] surrounded me;
All thy breakers and thy billows passed over me.
5 And I said: I am cast out from before thine eyes;
Yet I will look again towards thy holy temple.•
6 Waters encompassed me even to the soul:[5]
The abyss surrounded me;
Sea-weed[6] was bound to my head.
7 I went down to the foundations[7] of the mountains;
The earth — her bars were behind me forever:
And thou didst raise my life from the pit, Jehovah, my God.
8 When my soul fainted[8] within me,
I remembered Jehovah:
And my prayer came to Thee,
Into thy holy temple.
Those observing lying vanities
Forsake their own mercy.[9]
10 But as for me, I will sacrifice to thee
With the voice of thanksgiving.
What I have vowed I will perform.
Salvation[1] belongs to Jehovah.
11 And Jehovah spake to the fish, and it vomited Jonah upon the dry land.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1. — מִנָּה, Piel of מָנָה, does not mean to *create*, but to *allot*, to *appoint*.

[2 Ver. 3. — מִבֶּטֶן שְׁאוֹל, out of the womb of the under world. The usual derivation of שְׁאוֹל is from שָׁאַל, *to ask*, *to demand;* but Gesenius says the true etymology is שְׁעוֹל, *cavity*, from שָׁעַל. Compare the German *Hölle*, hell, originally the same with *Höhle*, a hollow, cavern.

[3 Ver. 4. — מְצוּלָה, the deep is defined by "the heart of the seas" — the deepest part of the ocean.

[4 Ver. 4. — נָהָר, *stream*, *current*, *flood* — the current or tide of the sea. Compare Ps. xxiv. 2.

[5 Ver. 6. — עַד־נֶפֶשׁ, *even to*, or to the very soul, *i. e.*, to the extinction of the animal life.

[6 Ver. 6. — סוּף, *alga*, or *weed*, which abounds at the bottom of the sea, and from which the Arabian Gulf takes the name of יַם־סוּף, the *sea of weeds*.

[7 Ver. 7 — קִצְבֵים, *sections*, *cuttings*, *clefts*. Vulgate, *extrema montium*. Septuagint, *εἰς σχισμὰς ὀρέων*. The foundations and roots of the mountains, which lie in the depths of the earth, reaching even to the foundation of the sea. (Compare Ps. xviii. 16).

[8 Ver. 8. — הִתְעַטֵּף, to be in a state of *faintness*, *swoon*, from עָטַף, to *cover*, to involve in darkness. LXX. Ἐν τῷ ἐκλείπειν τὴν ψυχήν μου ἀπ' ἐμοῦ.

[9 Ver. 9. — חַסְדָּם, their *mercy* or *goodness*, by metonymy for God, the author and source of mercy and goodness. (Compare Ps. cxliv. 2.)

[10 Ver. 10. — Henderson says the paragogic ה in יְשׁוּעָתָה is intensive; but it is merely a poetical form. Compare Ps. iii. 3; lxxx. 3. It is appended to nouns for the purpose of softening the termination, without affecting the sense. — C. E.]

Verses 1, 2. *The Crisis.* [In the English Version ver. 1 forms the conclusion of the preceding chapter. In the original Hebrew it is the opening verse of chap. ii. — C. E.]

The narrative says nothing of the kind of fish that swallowed Jonah; it attaches no importance to the question. *Inutilis inquisitio.* (Marck.) The Septuagint and the New Testament (Matth. xii. 40), translate it by the indefinite word Κῆτος, a sea monster; compare Bocharti *Hierozoicon*, i. 1, 7; ii. 5, 12. [Suidas following Ælian: *Κῆτος θαλάσσιον θηρίον πολυειδές· ἐστὶ δὲ λέων, ζύγαινα, πάρδαλις, φύσαλος, πρῆστις, ἡ λεγομένη μάλλη ἢ μάλθη.*] Still more general [than *κῆτος*] is the feminine form דָּגָה, which occurs in ver. 2, instead of דָּג, and which is used everywhere else (also in Deut. iv. 18) as a collective noun.

(The opinion of Izchakis that Jonah was first swallowed by a male fish, and that because he did not pray in it, he was vomited up and swallowed by a female one, in which his situation was more confined, and that from this circumstance he was driven to prayer, deserves mention at best as a curious and warning example of the absurdity to which adherence to the letter may lead in exegesis).

One may suppose the fish to have been the shark or sea-dog, *Canis carcharias*, or *Squalus carcharias*, L., which is very common in the Mediterranean, and has so large a throat, that it can swallow a living man whole. (Keil). It could hardly be the whale, as Luther thinks, for these two conditions [being common in the Mediterranean, and having a large throat — C. E.] do not meet in it. The cachalot also, mentioned by Quandt, is not found in the Mediterranean.

[Dr. Pusey, in his introduction to Jonah, quotes largely from modern works on zoölogy and natural history, to prove that the *Canis carcharias* can easily swallow a man whole. He states on the authority of Blumenbach, that it has been "found of the size of 10,000 pounds and that "horses have been found whole in its stomach." "In all modern works on zoölogy," says Dr. Pusey, quoting from Lacepède, *Hist. des Poissons*, "we find thirty feet given as a common length for a shark's body. Now a shark's body is usually only about eleven times the length of the half of its lower jaw. Consequently, a shark of thirty feet would have a lower jaw of nearly six feet in its semicircular extent. . Even if such a jaw as this was of hard bony consistence, instead of a yielding cartilaginous nature, it would qualify its possessor for engulfing one of our species most easily. This power, which it has by virtue of its cartilaginous skeleton, of stretching, bending, and yielding, enables us to understand how the shark can swallow entire animals as large or larger than ourselves." — C. E.]

"There is nothing in the original word, מָנָה, which at all suggests the idea of creation or production. . . . . All that can be legitimately inferred from its use in this place, is, that in the providence of God, the animal was brought to the spot at the precise time when Jonah was thrown into the sea, and its instrumentality was wanted for his deliverance." (Henderson, *On Jonah.*) "The fact here stated is the great stone of stumbling and rock of offense to that class of critics who deny the existence of miracles. We need have no special sympathy with their perplexities or their stumbling; for there can be no good reason for rejecting miracles. Besides in this case, our divine Lord distinctly recognizes the presence of miracles by saying that Jonah was "a *sign*," i. e., a man in whom miracles were manifested "It is not necessarily a miracle that a great fish should swallow a man. There are several varieties that are capable of swallowing a man whole, for they have done it. But that a man should live three days and three nights, or indeed one hour, in the belly of a fish, must be a miracle." (Cowles, *On Jonah.*) C. E.]

Jonah lives *three days and three nights* in the inside, literally *in the bowels* of the fish. *Three days and three nights* is a current Hebrew expression, which does not describe, with chronological exactness, the space of seventy-two hours, but corresponds to our mode of designating time by such phrases as "the day after *to-morrow*," "*the day before yesterday.*" (1 Sam. xxx. 1; comp. ver. 12, Esth. iv. 16; comp. v. 1; Matth. xii. 40.)

[The three days and three nights are not to be regarded as three times twenty [four] hours, but are to be interpreted according to Hebrew usage, as signifying that Jonah was vomited up again on the third day after he had been swallowed. (Comp. Esth. iv. 16 with v. 1, and Tob. iii. 12, 13 according to the Lutheran text.) (Keil and Delitzsch, *On Jonah.* — C E.]

[Ver. 2. The prayer which follows (vers. 2–9) is not a petition for deliverance, but thanksgiving and praise for deliverance already received. It by no means follows from this however, that Jonah did not utter this prayer till after he had been vomited upon the land, and that ver. 10 ought to be inserted before ver. 2; but as the earlier commentators have shown, the fact is rather this: that when Jonah had been swallowed by the fish, and found that he was preserved alive in the fish's belly, he regarded this as a pledge of his deliverance, for which he praised the Lord.

Luther also observes that he did not actually utter these very words with his mouth, and arrange them in this orderly manner, in the belly of the fish; but that he here shows what the state of his mind was, and what thoughts he had when he was engaged in this conflict with death. The expression "his God" [אֱלֹהָיו] must not be overlooked. He prayed not only to Jehovah, as the heathen sailors also did (ch. i. 14), but to Jehovah as his God, from whom he had tried to escape, and whom he now addresses again as his God, when in peril of death. "He shows his *faith* by adoring Him as *his* God." (Burk.) The prayer consists for the most part of reminiscences of passages in the Psalms, which were so exactly suited to Jonah's circumstances, that he could not have expressed his thoughts and feelings any better in words of his own. It is by no means so "atomically compounded from passages in the Psalms" that there is any ground for pronouncing it "a later production which has been attributed to Jonah," as Knobel and De Wette do; but it is the simple and natural utterance of a man versed in Holy Scripture and living in the word of God, and is in perfect accordance with the prophet's circumstances and the state of his mind." (Keil and Delitzsch, *On Jonah.*)—C. E.]

["Some of the Rabbins, Hezel and others, would argue from the use of מִן, *from, out of*, and not בְּ, *in*, before מְעֵי that the prayer of Jonah was not

presented while he was in the belly of the fish, but after his deliverance; but this interpretation is justly rejected, both by Aben Ezra and Kimchi. The preposition marks the place from which he directed his thoughts to the Most High." (Henderson, *On Jonah.*) — C. E.]

Vers. 3–10. The prayer of Jonah, which is not a supplicatory, but a thanksgiving prayer, is in this place to be understood only from the design of the book (compare the Introduction, 3, pp. 6, 7). Also what Keil, following the early interpreters, observes, has its truth only from the point of view, that when Jonah had been swallowed by the fish and had found that he was preserved in its belly, he regarded this as a pledge of his future complete deliverance, and for this thanked the Lord. Considered in a purely historical light [*Bei rein historischem Verständniss*], it might be said that the prolongation of life in this manner [in the fish's belly] would rather awaken the idea of a much more loathsome death than drowning, and hence the accompanying feeling must have been, not that of thanksgiving, but of painful uncertainty. Moreover, something at least would have been said in the prayer, of that intermediate idea of a pledge; but no trace of it is to be found.

The structure of this hymn, composed after the manner of the Psalms and filled with reminiscences of passages from them, falls into three strophes, namely ver. 4 f.. 6 f.. 8; which are set in the frame of a brief exordium and of a conclusion summing up the whole in an aphorism and a vow, ver. 9 f. Each of these strophes represents a degree in the ascent from distress to deliverance; so that strophe 1 advances to hope; strophe 2 to deliverance; and strophe 3 stops on this eminence Compare, concerning the form and kind of prayer, the Introduction, p. 8.

Ver. 3. The brief preamble: **I cried out of the distress which was upon me, to Jehovah, and He answered me.** Comp. Ps. cxvi. 1 f. With trifling variations, "which very naturally occur in quotations from memory" (Goldhorn), it resembles Ps. cxx. 1, which has בַּצָּרָתָה לִּי, whereas this verse with the same periphrastic suffix reads, מִצָּרָה לִי. The parallel: **Out of the womb of Sheol I cried: Thou heardest my voice.** That the expression *womb* of Sheol is figurative, is proved by its parallelism to צָרָה. Sheol in the language of the Psalms, is often used for the inevitable peril of death: compare the way to perdition, Proverbs vii. 27. To ascribe to it a belly or a womb, as at other times a mouth (Ps. clxi. 7), or jaws (Is. v. 14), was certainly not indicated by the situation as the act of Jonah, who describes something past and not present, but was done by the narrator, who produces the prayer. (Compare Luther's observation, in the Introd., p. 8).

The alleged mechanical compilation of this prayer from passages in the Psalms reduces itself also here to involuntary reminiscences of isolated expressions found in them. (Comp. Ps. cxxx: 2; xxviii. 1 ff.) [Comp. Ps. cxx. 1 with Jonah ii. 3; Ps. xlii. 8 with ver. 4; Ps. xxxi. 23 with ver. 5; Ps. cxlii. 4 with ver. 8; Ps. xxxi. 7 with ver. 9; Ps. iii. 9 with ver. 10.[1] Henderson *On Jonah.*—C. E.]

Strophe I., vers. 4, 5.

Ver. 4 is an enlarged picture of the painful situation that he experienced. The connection indicated by ו conjunctive, is not so close as to prevent the verb from being rendered in the pluperfect. **Yea, thou hadst cast me into the abyss, into the midst of the seas** (comp. Ps. xlvi. 3): **and thy streams surrounded me; all thy billows and waves went over me** (Ps. lxxxviii. 7 f.; Ps. lxix. 2 ff). These are frequent images of the deepest misery, which, in this instance, receive, from the situation, a particularly impressive character, and give the key to the understanding of the symbolism of the whole narrative. In Jonah overwhelmed by the waves, Israel, whose frame of mind is exhibited in Ps. lxxxviii., is again represented. The state of heart required by God for deliverance, a state produced by faith, which, in the deepest distress, rests upon the word and promise of God, and which, contrary to all external experience, does not relinquish its confidence in invisible things, which are the objects of hope in our present condition, is exquisitely described by the brief antithetic contrast in ver. 5: **And I said** (comp. Ps. xxx. 7) **I am cast out from before thine eyes** — the gracious experience of thy favor — (Is. xxxiv. 16; Ps. xxxi. 23), **yet surely** [אַךְ, a particle of strong opposition, of decided contrast (Is. xiv. 15)] **I will look again toward Thy holy temple,** for which Israel, in his forlorn condition, ardently longs (Ps. xlii. 5). Compare a similar flash of hope in the night of suffering, in Job xix. 22 ff. ["Green would supply the negative לֹא before אוֹסִיף, and Hitzig would point אֵךְ, אַךְ for אֵיךְ, how; but both without any authority. Such sudden transitions from fear to hope are frequently expressed in Scripture." (Henderson *On Jonah.*) — C. E.]

["The thought that it is all over with him is met by the confidence of faith that he will still look to the holy temple of the Lord, that is to say, will once more approach the presence of the Lord, to worship before Him in his temple, — an assurance which recalls Ps. v. 8 (7)."

"The figure of bolts of the earth that were shut behind Jonah, which we only meet with here (בְּעַד, from the phrase סָגַר הַדֶּלֶת בְּעַד, to shut the door behind a person: Gen. vii. 16; 2 K. iv. 4, 5, 33; Is. xxvi. 20), has an analogy in the idea which occurs in Job xxxviii. 10, of bolts and doors of the ocean. The bolts of the sea are the walls of the sea-basin, which set bounds to the sea, that it cannot pass over. Consequently the bolts of the earth can only be such barriers as restrain the land from spreading over the sea. These barriers are the weight and force of the waves, which prevent the land from encroaching on the sea. This weight of the waves, or of the great masses of water, which pressed upon Jonah when he had sunk to the bottom of the sea, shut or bolted against him the way back to the earth (the land) just as the bolts that are drawn before the door of a house, fasten up the entrance into it; so that the reference is neither to "the rocks jutting out above the water, which prevented any one from ascending from the sea to the land," nor "*densissima terræ compages, qua abyssus tecta Jonam in hac constitutum occludebat.*" (Marck), Keil and Delitzsch. — C. E.]

1 It must be remembered that Dr. Henderson numbers the last verse of the first chapter as it stands in the English Version, as the first verse of the second chapter. This explanation is necessary in order to understand the references quoted above. — C. E.]

Strophe II., vers. 6, 7.

The picture receives again a deeper shade, in view of the misery which he experienced.

Ver. 6. **Waters encompassed me** (Ps. xviii. 5) **even to the soul** (Ps. lxix. 2): **the abyss surrounded me; seaweed was wound around my breast,** — all individual and independent statements descriptive of his situation.

[" עַד־נֶפֶשׁ, *even to*, or *to the very soul*, *i. e.* the animal life; meaning to the extinction of life. סוּף is the *alga*, or weed, which abounds at the bottom of the sea, and from which the Arabian gulf takes the name of יַם־סוּף, the sea of weeds. Kimchi explains it by גּוֹמֶא, the papyrus, or bulrush. Gesenius refines too much when he attaches to חָבוּשׁ in this place the idea of binding round the head like a turban. Assuredly Jonah had no such idea in his mind. He rather describes how he felt, as if entangled by the sedge or weeds through which he was dragged." (Henderson, *On Jonah.*) — C. E.]

Ver. 7. **To the extremities,** *i. e.*, **to the foundations of the mountains,** which lie deep under **the sea** (Ps. civ. 4 (3); xviii. 16 (15)), **I dived down; the earth — her bars** — the beams with which her foundation structure is fastened (Ps. civ. 5) — **were around me** [Hitzig: behind me; then I seemed thrust out from the land of the living, (Jer. xi. 19)] **for ever**; so thought the sinking prophet; for present sufferings and the perils of death made upon his mind the impression of the everlasting and the inevitable (Ps. xiii. 2 (1)). **Thou didst raise my life from the pit** (שַׁחַת, as in Job xvii. 14), **Jehovah my God** (Ps. xxx. 4 (3)).

Strophe III.

Ver. 8. Casts once more a glance upon his affliction: **When my soul** (Ps. cxlii. 4) **fainted** to dying (Ps. xlii. 5) **within me**; in order to include with it directly the deliverance: **Jehovah** (a beautiful inversion) **I remembered** (Ps. xlii. 7 (6)), **and my prayer came to Thee into Thy holy temple,** from which prayers are heard (Ps. xviii. 7 (6)).

The conclusion (vers. 9, 10) places in an antithetic manner, which is of frequent occurrence in the Psalms, the vow of the pious man, who, through divine grace, has resolved to lead a new life, in contrast with the destruction of the ungodly, whom God does not deliver.

Ver. 9. **Those who observe lying vanities** — the Piel of שִׁמֵּר like the Hithpael (Mich. vi. 16), for the intensive degree of the Kal signification — **forsake their own mercy.** The reference to the heathen sailors, which the earlier interpreters, almost without exception, give to this verse, is, according to the description of them in the first chapter, certainly altogether unauthorized. The thought is entirely general, but (from the scope of the whole) with parenetical, secondary application to the Israelites, who in calamity did not seek their help in God, but in idols (הבלים, comp. Deut. xxxii. 21). These apostates come by the short and energetic expression, in harmony with Gen. xxiv. 27, into direct opposition to God, who never abandons his mercy. חסד is the gracious condition of the חסידים, the pious (Is. lvii. 1).

[" חַסְדָּם, lit. *their mercy, or goodness*; by metonymy for their Benefactor, *i. e.* God, the author and source of all goodness; the supreme good. Comp. Ps. cxliv. 2, where David calls God חַסְדִּי. The word properly signifies *kindness* or *benignity*, and most appropriately designates Him who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works." (Henderson, *On Jonah.*) So also Keil and Delitzsch and Pusey. — C. E.]

Ver. 10. **But I,** says Israel, conformably to Ps. l. 14, **will sacrifice to thee with the voice of thanksgiving. What I have vowed I will pay.** With the joyful ascription, **salvation belongs to Jehovah,** the whole prayer closes, like Ps. iii. That is the salvation, which He will give to his people, after their affliction, at the time of the consummation, looking to which the true Israel, even in the belly of the fish, in the sorrows of banishment and exile, praises Him (Is. xxvi. 2; xxv. 10; Gen. xlix. 18).

Ver. 11. *The Deliverance.* Jehovah spake to the fish and it vomited up Jonah on dry land. *Προστάττεται πάλιν τὸ κῆτος θείᾳ τινὶ καὶ ἀποῤῥήτῳ δυνάμει θεοῦ πρὸς τὸ αὐτῷ δοκοῦν κινούμενον.* Cyril. Cocceius, in order to bring the miracle nearer to the natural understanding, refers to the statements of Gregory Nazianzen and Oppian, concerning certain fish, which swallow their young when danger threatens, and vomit them out again. He refers also to the accounts in Pliny and Athenæus, that an entire man clad in armor has been found in the belly of a great sea-monster (Pliny, *Canicula*, Athen. *Carcharias*). There were found, says Keil, on the authority of Oken (*Animal Kingdom*, vol. iii. p. 55 ff., 1836), about a dozen of tunny-fish, undigested, in a shark caught in Sardinia; and in another even an entire horse. (This fish can erect and lay its teeth at pleasure, because they are fastened only in the cellular tissue [*Hautzellen*]). Rondelet says that he has seen one on the west coast of France, through whose throat a fat man could easily pass. In the year 1758, a sailor, during a storm, fell overboard from a frigate into the Mediterranean sea, and was immediately seized by a shark and disappeared. The captain of the vessel caused a cannon, which was standing on the deck, to be discharged at the shark, the ball of which struck it, so that it vomited out the sailor, who was then taken up alive and only a little injured, into a sloop that had come to his assistance, and thus saved. On the other side, Cornelius a Lapide attempts to explain the vomiting, at least, as a natural occurrence produced by the uncomfortableness of the fish. We think that no service is done either to the matter or to the interpretation [*Verständniss*] of the book by this rationalizing apologetic attempt (see above, p. 2), and especially in reference to the latter question we are of the opinion of Theodoret, who calls subtle inquiries concerning these things an *ἀνόητος πολυπραγμοσύνη*, a foolish officiousness.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.[1]

(See above, pp. 5, 6, 9, 10.)

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Eternal Redemption in Time. *Introduction.* — Israel, a prefiguration of Christendom; Jonah,

1 [*Reichsgedanken.* See note, p. 20. — C. E.]

a type of Israel. Comp. ver. 8 with 1 K. viii. 46 ff.

1. *We still wander in the place of imprisonment*, 2, 4, 5a, 6, 7ab. [Daily sins and the common guilt of the human race encompass us within and without; our body is an earthly house, in which our immortal part lies shut up; around us is the sighing of the creature, which longs for the glorious manifestation of the sons of God.]

2. *But we are redeemed*, ver. 3, 5b, 7c–10. [The fact is absolute and eternal: the appropriation is effected in time, and that through faith, which is a certain, confident apprehension of that which is still invisible, 5b, 8. Whoever renounces it [faith] has no part in redemption (ver. 9). In the service of God we bring that which is eternal into time, and think as if we were perfected; because the beginning of redemption, planted in us, includes within it its completion (vers. 3, 10).

Ver. 1. In that which for the moment seems most painful and most insupportable, the gracious hand of our God is often very near to us. Everything which God sends has its fixed time and appointed end; a time not longer than we are able to bear it. Thou who complainest of affliction, hast thou ever thought what grace it is on the part of God that thou art alive? — Ver. 2. There is no place so desolate and dark that it cannot be turned into a temple of God by the praying saint. — Ver. 3. There is no failure in God's answer, but the failure is in calling upon Him. Can we need human mediators, in order to be heard by Him, who hears the voice of him who cries from the bosom of hell? The invocation of saints is a relapse into a practice, that is far below the teachings of the Old Testament. — Ver. 4. We ought never to forget, that wherever we are, we are placed there by God [*wir von Gott dahin gethan sind*], and that all the waves and billows that go over us are his waves and billows. In the Old Testament God sends the tempest of the waves and billows. In the New Testament He commands them to be still; in both they are obedient to Him. — Ver. 5. With the natural man arises first defiance, then despair: with the redeemed man strength is realized out of despair by the power of the spirit. The declarations of faith are all paradoxes and contrasts. Because I suffer, I shall be glorified. — Ver. 6 ff. If I descend to hell, behold Thou art there. Such is the anguish of the hour of death that one no longer perceives aught of love around him, but all around the head and on every side waters, which go even to the soul, so that the spirit faints within us. God's temple is near in all places. But whoever speaks of it as Jonah does here, it is evident that he also loves the visible place, where God's honor dwelleth. Whoever despises this place, to him that truth will not come to remembrance in the time of trouble. The want of the means of grace is not damnable to him only, whose soul does not despise them. — Ver. 9. Where lying vanities take up their abode in the heart, there is the contempt of God, or there it grows; it is there also where man either makes earthly things God's, or forms for himself delusive ideas concerning God. Falling from a state of grace, may happen altogether insensibly; but it certainly commences with a divided heart. — Ver. 10. The history of Jonah is a shadow of future things; he leaves it to the heathen to bring a sacrifice (i. 16), he himself offers thanksgiving. — Ver. 11. Turn the prison of the world into the temple of God, and it will not be able to detain thee. God does not leave his saints in hell (Ps. xvi. 10). We are buried with Christ by baptism unto death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Rom. vi. 4).

Luther: Ver. 3. Two great and necessary lessons: 1. That we should before all things run speedily to God, and cry to Him in trouble and make our complaints to Him. Canst thou call and cry, then there is no more danger. For even hell would not be hell, nor continue hell, if in it one could call upon and cry to God. Nature of course cannot do otherwise, nor be otherwise, than as it feels. But now while it feels God's wrath and punishment, if it regards Him as an angry tyrant it cannot rise above such feelings and press through to God. Therefore, since Jonah has gone so far as to cry, he has won. 2. That we also feel in our hearts, that it is such a cry as God will answer. This is nothing else than to call with true faith of heart. For the head does not erect itself, nor do the hands raise themselves, before the heart is raised. What hell is before the last day, I am not positive. That it is a particular place, where lost souls are now constantly kept, as painters portray and as gluttons preach, I do not believe; for the devils are not yet in hell (Eph. vi. 12; John xiv. 30). Therefore, the Scriptures use the word Sheol with propriety, for the purpose of designating the last agonies of death. But at the last day it will certainly become a different thing. — Ver. 5. The idea of his being cast out from God's countenance, has in the first place a reference to his body; for he felt in his heart that he must die; in the second place, to his soul, as if he were eternally cast out from God. — Ver. 8. The powers and energies of his soul yielded to despair. But that he thinks of the Lord and begins to believe, is not the work of his soul; the spirit and no one else can think of the Lord. When the remembrance of the Lord enters the heart, then a new light arises; then life once more sheds forth its rays; then the heart again receives courage to call; and then too he is certainly heard. In the Old Testament all prayers were required to come to the mercy-seat; so now in the New Testament all prayers must come to Jesus Christ. — Ver. 9. Jonah reproves in this verse those devoid of understanding, who seek holiness by their own deeds, and hypocrites, who do not trust in God's grace alone, but in their own works. — Ver. 10. Where the saints in the Scriptures speak of paying vows and do not express any one [vow] in particular, we must understand the common vow of all, who are God's people, namely, that we will have no God but Him alone. — Ver. 11. Now everything is reversed: that which before tended to death must now tend to life.

Starke: Ver. 1. God can preserve a man miraculously against the course of nature (1 K. xvii. 4 ff.). — Ver. 2. God is not only the God of all believers in general, but also of each one particularly (Ps. lxiii. 2). — Ver. 3. Nothing can better excite a man to gratitude toward God than to consider diligently the trouble and danger from which God has delivered him. — Ver. 4. It is great misery to lie in the water; but the greatest is to be cast out from God. — Ver. 5. When we have bodily trouble, it ordinarily so arouses the guilty conscience, that our distress is doubled. In the hour of death Satan is most active with his temptations, and would like to cast us into despair. — Ver. 6. God, moved by righteous judgment and wise design, often visits with many trials and afflictions of different kinds those who have already exercised true repentance. — Ver. 7. It is a special, gracious work of the Holy Spirit, if He gives

to believers, in the midst of their troubles, not only a good hope of the divine aid, but also strengthens them in the faith, so that they consider it as already actually attained (Ex. xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xx. 13 ff.). — Ver. 8. When we come into the pains of death, and our mouth can no longer speak, then should our heart sigh to God. — Ver. 10. One should keep his vows (Eccles. v. 4). — Ver. 11. God gives beyond our asking and our understanding. The almighty hand of God will one day restore to life those who have perished in the waters (Rev. xx. 13).

PFAFF: Ver. 4. O, how good it is for the soul to feel the anger of the Lord and to be driven into straits; for thereby it is brought right to God, and its faith is strengthened. — Ver. 5. A child of God longs for the temple and public service of God, in order to praise the Lord becomingly in the congregation and to be quickened by the mutual prayer of the pious.

QUANDT: Our Lord has interpreted to us, in the New Testament, the history contained in this chapter as a prophecy of Him; as a sign of his death, of his descent to Hades, and of his resurrection. On this account this chapter acquires a glory, which the other three have not. — Ver 1. If a man should be received unhurt into a fish's body, according to the course of nature he cannot breathe and live a single hour. At all events the Lord wrought a miracle in the case of Jonah; we can in his case altogether dispense with natural history. With many repentance is a mere speculation on the act of bestowing grace, — a speculation that fails, when the Lord leads the soul still deeper into judgment or misery. Not so with Jonah. — Ver. 2. Jonah was very well acquainted with the Psalter and had committed to memory many a prayer of the saints. This was of great advantage to him now, as his prayer shows. There is good reason why a man should come before the throne of the Merciful One, with his own words, instead of set forms. But in times of spiritual drought a manual has also its advantages. — Ver. 4. With Thou and Thine Jonah clings to the same Divine hand, which punishes him, and therefore this hand must raise him from the deep to a high place. — Ver. 8. ff. Jonah trusts that God, who had delivered his soul, would now also do the less and save his body. By faith he sees his deliverance as already accomplished, and for that reason promises to God offerings of thanksgiving.

AUGUSTINE: Ver. 1. Jonah prophesied of Christ, not so much by his words as by sufferings; and evidently more clearly than if he had announced his sufferings and resurrection by words.

MARCK: God often makes an end of temptation contrary to human expectation (1 Cor. x. 13), and never denies his favor, because He cannot deny Himself (2 Tim ii. 13).

LAVATER: That Jonah could draw breath in the belly of the fish, or receive as much air as he had need of, was just as possible as that a child can live in its mother's womb.

BURCK: Ver. 2. Wonderful change (i. 6) — he made little haste to pray; he suffered himself to be driven to it. Now in the deepest misery he prays not only most earnestly, but most confidently.

THEODORET: Ver. 3. I, says he, who heretofore thought that thou dwellest only in Jerusalem, and only there revealest thyself to the prophets, found thee present in the belly of the fish, etc.

BURCK: We have in this prayer an example of the right use of the Psalter. Even the holy men of God, who were partakers of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, have not refused to appeal to and to cite formally the books of Scripture, which existed already in their time. A strong argument for the authority of the holy Scriptures.

RIEGER: We should in this sign consider Jonah particularly as a type of the deep humiliation of the Son of God in the midst of the earth and of his reviving from the dead, that event, whose light ever afterward falls on all the paths of life, otherwise still so deep and dark.

RIEGER: To attain good by means of the wrath which one experiences is no small matter. It is as if one were obliged to pass through nothing but spears and swords. Many expressions in the prayer of Jonah are taken from the Psalms. So in similar circumstances something out of the Scriptures will occur, often only after a long time, to the memory of the sufferer.

RIEGER: Ver. 5. What an eternal sting do all our humiliations carry with them, when three days and three nights can become as long to a man as if he were forever isolated.

BURCK: Ver. 7. Here first, in the end of his prayer, Jonah ventures to use the direct and confident address: Jehovah, my God, doubtless with the most heartfelt delight. Before he had humbly and anxiously abstained from it.

HIERONYMUS: Ver. 9. Those who not merely practice vanity (for all is vanity, therefore all practice it), but observe it as if they loved it and found a treasure in it.

SCHMIEDER: Ver. 10. All help comes from the Lord, even where He helps through means; therefore we should not trust in the means, whether things or persons, but in the Lord, and thank Him first for all help. — Ver. 11. The instinct of beasts can be controlled by the will of God. (Comp. Dan. vi. 22.)

SCHLIER: What was likely to be the effect upon Jonah, who experienced such a miraculous interposition on the part of his God! What was likely to be the effect upon others, who heard of it, for the report of the miracle soon spread abroad. Even the heathen fables know something of it. [In the poem, Cassandra, ascribed to Lycophron, and in a fragment of the logographer Hellenicus, cited by the Scholiasts on Homer's Iliad, xx. 145, it is related, that Hercules delivered Hesione by entering into the belly of a sea-monster, to which she was exposed, whose entrails he tore in pieces and came out again in safety; and the church fathers state that the myth ascribes to his stay in the monster's belly three days' continuance.]

[CALVIN: 9 (10.) It must be noticed here that the worship of God especially consists in praises, as it is said in Ps. l.: for there God shows that he regards as nothing all sacrifices, except they answer this end — to set forth the praise of his name. It was indeed his will that sacrifices should be offered to Him under the law; but it was for the end just stated; for God cares not for calves and oxen, for goats and lambs; but his will was that He should be acknowledged as the Giver of all blessings. Hence He says there "sacrifice to me the sacrifice of praise."

MATTHEW HENRY: Ver. 2. No place is amiss for prayer. *I will that men pray everywhere:* wherever God casts us we may find a way open heavenward, if it be not our own fault. — Ver. 10. Jonah's experience shall encourage others, in all ages, to trust in God, as the God of their salvation: all that read this story, shall say it with assurance, say it with admiration, that salvation is of the Lord, and is sure to all that belong to Him.

PUSEY: 7 (8). But when it came to the utmost, then he says, *I remembered the Lord*, as though, in the intense thought of God then, all his former thought of God had been forgetfulness. So it is in every strong act of faith, of love, of prayer; its former state seems unworthy of the name of faith, love, prayer. It believes, loves, prays, as though all before had been forgetfulness. — Ver. 9 (10) God seems often to wait for the full resignation of the soul, all its powers and will to Him. Then He can show mercy healthfully, when the soul is wholly surrendered to Him. So on this full confession Jonah is restored. — C. E.]

CHAPTER III.

[*The Renewal of Jonah's Commission* (vers. 1, 2). *His Preaching to the Ninevites* (vers. 3–4). *Humiliation and Reformation of the Ninevites* (vers. 5–9.) *Reversal of the Divine Sentence* (ver. 10). — C. E.]

1 And the word of the Lord [Jehovah] came [was communicated] unto Jonah
2 the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto
3 it the preaching [make the proclamation to it] that I bid thee. So [And] Jonah
arose, and went unto [to] Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord [Jehovah].
Now [And] Nineveh was an exceeding great city [a great city to God] of three
4 days' journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey [a journey
of one day], and he cried [proclaimed], and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall
5 be overthrown. So [And] the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed
a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.
6 For [And] word came [had come] unto [to] the king of Nineveh, and he arose from
his throne, and he [*omit* he] laid his robe from him [put off his robe from him], and
7 covered *him* [himself] with sack cloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published [and said] through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his
nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let
8 them not feed, nor drink water: But [And] let man and beast be covered with
sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea [and] let them turn every one from his
9 evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell[3] [knoweth] *if*
[*but that*] [the] God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger
10 [glow of anger], that we perish not? And [the] God saw their works, that they
turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that [which] he had said
that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 2. — הַקְּרִיאָה, that which is proclaimed, proclamation; τὸ κήρυγμα, (LXX.); *prædicatio* (Vulgate).

[2 Ver. 7. — טַעַם = טְעֵם, Dan. iii. 10, 29, a technical term for the edicts of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings.

[3 Ver. 9. — מִי־יוֹדֵעַ, who is knowing? — C. E.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1–9. *The preaching of Repentance by Jonah in Nineveh and its Result.*

Ver. 1, 2. God sends the prophet, the second time, to make his proclamation — his Kriah — against Nineveh; the same that was to be put in his mouth. דֹּבֵר, part. fut. as in Is. v. 5. [דֹּבֵר signifies, according to the idiomatic use of the participle, *about to tell*, and suggests the idea of a proximate futurity. — C. E.]

Ver. 3. Jonah is made wiser by the chastisement which he experienced, and does not again attempt to evade the call.

Now Nineveh was a great city (comp. the Introduction, p. 9) **before God** [*für Gott*]. The *dativus ethicus* designates not an inward peculiar relation of Nineveh to God, as in the passage (Acts vii. 20) quoted by *Hitzig*; but it corresponds to the phrase "before God," which is applied to Nimrod, the founder of the city (Gen. x. 9), and denotes here the world-position of the city, there of the person. Men may appear great to their people; cities to their possessors, or spectators, and still not occupy a world-position. (Deut. i. 28). ["עִיר גדולָה לֵאלֹהִים, *a city great to God*. This phrase has been variously explained. Some, with Kimchi, deem it merely a superlative form; Gesenius construes the ל instrumentally, *great through God, i. e.*, through his favor. Others consider it to be equivalent to לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים *before God*, Gen. x. 9. Thus the Targum קֳדָם יְיָ. Of this last interpretation I approve, as it was most natural to refer the size of a city, of which

the Hebrews could form no adequate conception, to the Divine estimation. I have accordingly rendered the words literally, as our preposition *to* is often used to note opinion, or estimate." Henderson *On Jonah*.

"But Nineveh was *a great city to God* (le'lōhīm), *i. e.*, it was regarded by God as a great city. This remark points to the motive for sparing it (cf. ch. iv. 11) in case its inhabitants hearkened to the word of God." Keil and Delitzsch.

"*Nineveh was an exceeding great city*; lit. *great to God*, *i. e.*, that would not only appear great to man who admires things of no account, but what, being really great, is so in the judgment of God who cannot be deceived. God *did* account it great, who says to Jonah, *Should not I spare Nineveh that great city, which hath more than six score thousand that cannot discern between their right and their left?* It is a different idiom from that, when Scripture speaks of *the mountains of God, the cedars of God*. For of these it speaks, as having their firmness or their beauty from God, as their Author." Pusey.

"The phrase 'an exceeding great city,' stands in the Hebrew, 'a city great *to God*,' *i. e.*, great before Him, — great as to Him, in his estimation. The Hebrews were accustomed to express their highest ideas of the superlative degree by using the name of God, *e. g.*, 'mountains of God,' etc. The sense of this passage may be somewhat more specific, representing the city as great in its relations to God, and not merely as very great apart from these relations." Cowles.

See Lange on Gen. x. 9; also the note by T. L. — C. E.]

Three days' journey — accusative of measure, as in Gen. xiv. 4.

Since (comp. on i. 2) the direct diameter of the city was only a day's journey, then the circumference is either designated by מַהֲלַךְ (this signification of מַהֲלַךְ, though consistent with the statement that the circumference of the city was four hundred and eighty stadia in extent, cannot be maintained), or the way (comp. Ez. xlii. 4), which united together the market-places of the different individual cities forming the great aggregate [*complexes*], and which it was, therefore, necessary to travel over, in order to go entirely through the city. Ver. 4, in which מהלך designates the way which Jonah travelled over, during the first day (יוֹם אחד, Ges. sec. 120, 4), points to the latter supposition. So certain is he of his message, and so impressed with the urgency of his mission, that he immediately begins to enter into the city, before obtaining a survey of it, and commences to preach on the first day's journey. His sermon is short, but powerful: **Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.** Forty days are here a round number, meaning after a short time, whose term Jonah measures by the period of the deluge. The LXX. translate it by a still more rigid formula, — **Yet three days.** This shortening of the time, however, would not harmonize with the facts of the case, since no time would have been left to the Ninevites for repentance,[1] for Jonah required three days to go through the city. The word employed to denote the destruction is the old prophetical technical term הָפַךְ, *evertere* (Is. i. 7; xiii. 19), which everywhere points back to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha. (Original passage, Gen. xix. 25.)

[Ver. 4. "Its greatness amounted to a 'three days' walk.' This is usually supposed to refer to the circumference of the city, by which the size of a city is generally determined. But the statement in ver. 4, that Jonah began to enter into the city the walk of a day, *i. e.*, a day's journey, is apparently at variance with this. Hence Hitzig has come to the conclusion that the diameter of the city is intended, and that, as the walk of a day in ver. 4 evidently points to the walk of three days in ver. 3, the latter must also be understood as referring to the length of Nineveh. But according to Diod. ii. 3 the length of the city was one hundred and fifty stadia, and Herod. (v. 53) gives just this number of stadia, as a day's journey. Hence Jonah would not have commenced his preaching till he had reached the opposite end of the city. This line of argument, the intention of which is to prove the absurdity of the narrative, is based upon the perfectly arbitrary assumption that Jonah went through the entire length of the city in a straight line, which is neither probable in itself, nor implied in בּוֹא בָעִיר. This simply means to enter, or go into the city, and says nothing about the direction of the course he took within the city. But in a city, the diameter of which was one hundred and fifty stadia, and the circumference four hundred and eighty stadia, one might easily walk for a whole day without reaching the other end, by winding about from one street into another. And Jonah would have to do this to find a suitable place for his preaching, since we are not warranted in assuming that it lay exactly in the geographical centre, or at the end of the street which led from the gate into the city. But if Jonah wandered about in different directions, as Theodoret says, 'not going through the city, but strolling through market-places, streets,' etc., the distance of a day's journey over which he travelled must not be understood as relating to the diameter or length of the city; so that the objection to the general opinion, that the three days' journey given as the size of the city refers to the circumference, entirely falls to the ground. Moreover, Hitzig has quite overlooked the word וַיָּחֶל in his argument. The text does not affirm that Jonah went a day's journey into the city, but that he 'began to go into the city a day's journey, and cried out.' These words do not affirm that he did not begin to preach till after he had gone a whole day's journey, but simply that he had commenced his day's journey in the city when he found a suitable place and a fitting opportunity for his proclamation. They leave the distance that he had really gone, when he began his preaching, quite indefinite; and by no means necessitate the assumption that he had only begun to preach in the evening, after his day's journey was ended. All that they distinctly affirm is, that he did not preach directly he entered the city, but only after he had commenced a day's journey, that is to say, had gone some distance into the city. And this is in perfect harmony with all that we know about the size of Nineveh at that time. The circumference of the great city Nineveh, or the length of the boundaries of the city of Nineveh in the broadest sense, was, as Niebuhr says (p. 277), 'nearly ninety English miles, not reckoning the smaller windings of the boundary; and this would be just

1 For the Heb. Text are Aqu., Symm., Theodot., Syr.; also, Hieron., Theodoret, Aug. Lange, *Bibelwerk O. T.*, xix.

three day's travelling for a good walker on a long journey.' 'Jonah,' he continues, begins to go a day's journey into the city, then preaches, and the preaching reaches the ears of the king (cf. ver. 6). He therefore came very near to the citadel as he went along on his first day's journey. At that time the citadel was probably in Nimrod (*Calah*). Jonah, who would hardly have travelled through the desert, went by what is now the ordinary caravan road past Amida, and therefore entered the city at Nineveh. And it was on the road from Nineveh to Calah, not far off the city, possibly in the city itself, that he preached. Now the distance between Calah and Nineveh (not reckoning either city), measured in a straight line upon the map, is eighteen and a half English miles.' If, then, we add to this, (1) that the road from Nineveh to Calah or Nimrod hardly ran in a perfectly straight line, and therefore would be really longer than the exact distance between the two parts of the city according to the map, and (2) that Jonah had first of all to go through Nineveh, and possibly into Calah, he may very well have walked twenty English miles, or a short day's journey, before he preached. The main point of his preaching is all that is given, namely, the threat that Nineveh should be destroyed, which was the point of chief importance, so far as the object of the book was concerned, and which Jonah of course explained by denouncing the sins and vices of the city." Keil and Delitzsch. — C. E.]

Ver. 5. **Then the men of Nineveh believed God.** That the Babylonians had a great respect for divination, so that what is here related does not appear strange (Keil), may appear apologetically an important observation; but this was probably not in the mind of the writer: it was his intention to relate something extraordinary. Moreover, he would not have employed the expression "believe," but the more common פחד, *fear*, or a similar word. (See moreover below at ver. 8.) The word *believe* here, as often elsewhere, is used with special reference to the appropriation of prophetical instruction to the soul's inner life (Is. vii. 9; Hab. ii. 4), without however excluding the element of justification, when confidence is exercised in the mercy of God. Its fruits, ver. 5 ff, are those which are required from preaching, repentance, and conversion (Joel ii. 15 ff.). And this repentance was indeed a general one, a repentance of the people, as it was carried out by bringing over to it all the inhabitants, the king, and even the beasts. Ver. 6 ff. is only a fuller recital of the brief historical statement in ver. 5, and should, according to the context, be rendered in the pluperfect: **For the matter had come to the King of Nineveh,** etc, to ver. 9. Our author is fond of such pluperfect adjuncts (i. 5–10). Following the natural, epic character of the narrative, we have retained the aorist in the translation. The king rises from his throne (comp. 2 Sam. xiii. 31), and lays aside his royal robe (comp. Josh. vii. 21), puts on a mourning-dress and sits in ashes — all a sign of sorrow and repentance (Ez. xxvi. 16).

The verbs in ver. 7 ff. have the indefinite subject "one": one proclaimed and said in Nineveh by the command of the king and his nobles also, etc. The royal heralds are meant, to whom the execution of the טעם (a north-Semitic word = תורה, comp. Dan. iii. 29 f.) was committed. That the beasts were included in the public humiliation is nothing unusual in the East. When Masistios fell at Platæa, the Persians, in honor of him, sheared the hair from their horses. (Herod. ix. 24. Comp. Brissonius, *De Regni Persarum Principiis*, ii. c. 206) Horses hung with black were, in the time of Chrysostom, frequently seen at funeral processions, and they are frequently to be seen at the present day. The custom has its foundation in the lively feeling of the mutual adaptation of man and nature. (Comp. Joel i. 18, and the description of the great grief in the fifth Eclogue of Virgil [also *Æneid*, xi. 89, c. e.].) Besides it is especially mentioned here as a reason, just as "great and small" ver. 5, that not merely repentance of sin, but also compassion toward guiltless creatures should move God to spare them (iv. 11). But it is not required to press to the utmost the separate applications of the royal edict, in the interest of the *fides historica*, otherwise we would be obliged to infer from ver. 8 that the cattle were clothed in mourning and that their lowing was taken for prayer, which was certainly not so. The strength of the expressions paints the depth of the repentance, and ver. 8 b shows the reason of their use by the king and by the narrator, who reproduces the edict: **and let them turn every one from his evil way** (Ez. xviii. 23), etc., **that we perish not** (comp. i. 6). It is too strongly asserted that this result of Jonah's denunciation of doom is psychologically incomprehensible in itself (Hitzig), because he spoke as a foreigner to a foreign people in a foreign language. But the esteem of antiquity for the oracles of the gods [*Götterstimmen*] is known; and the fact that the limits of national worship were thereby left undetermined, in proof of which we cite the well-known fact that Crœsus consulted the Grecian oracles (comp. Ezr. i. 1 ff.; Gen. xli; Numb. xxii; Luke vii). And the more threatening these oracles were, the more certain were they to obtain belief, as is natural, since the threatenings of divine punishment have a powerful ally in the conscience of man. If one reflects on the excitement, which ruled the souls of men about the year 1000 A. D.; on the results which the discourses of a Peter of Amiens, Capistrano, and others of their time had, though delivered in a language not understood; and considers that awe in which holy men were held by antiquity, of which even profane writers afford frequent examples, then the psychological difficulty vanishes, and there is no need of bringing the affinity of the Hebrew and Assyrian languages to our help, in order to find the result possible. It is injudicious to remove, in the interests of apologetics, everything miraculous from the narrative; but it is equally so to push, in the interest of polemics, the miraculous to silliness. Another psychological motive to repentance on the part of the Ninevites our Lord indicates, Luke xi. 30, when by the expression σημεῖον τοῖς Νινευίταις, he undoubtedly brings to light that the account of the wonderful events of his life formed an essential part of Jonah's sermon on repentance. (Comp. Luke xi. 32, and the Ob. of Luther on ver. 4 below.)

With reference to האלהים, vers. 9, 10 (comp. i. 6) Burck remarks: "*Non hic adhibetur nomen Jehovah, quia de populo gentili sermo est. Jehovæ cognitio sublimior, quam Dei.*"

Ver. 11. *The Compassion.* As faith expects, so it comes to pass. (Comp. Ex. xxxii. 12, 14.) God *looked* upon the Ninevites: He turned his countenance, with kind thoughts, toward them. (Comp. ver. 9. 1, 6.)

["But however deep the penitential mourning of Nineveh might be, and however sincere the repentance of the people, when they acted according to the king's command; the repentance was not a lasting one, or permanent in its effects. Nor did it evince a thorough conversion to God, but was merely a powerful incitement to conversion, a waking up out of the careless security of their life of sin, an endeavor to forsake their evil ways which did not last very long. The statement in ver. 10, that "God saw their doing, that they turned from their evil ways; and He repented of the evil that He had said that He would do to them, and did it not" (cf. Ex. xxxii. 14), can be reconciled with this without difficulty. The repentance of the Ninevites, even if it did not last, showed, at any rate, a susceptibility on the part of the heathen for the word of God, and their willingness to turn and forsake their evil and ungodly ways; so that God, according to his compassion, could extend his grace to them in consequence. God always acts in this way. He not only forgives the converted man, who lays aside his sin, and walks in newness of life; but He has mercy also upon the penitent who confesses and mourns over his sin, and is willing to amend. The Lord also directed Jonah to preach repentance to Nineveh; not that this capital of the heathen world might be converted at once to faith in the living God, and its inhabitants be received into the covenant of grace which He had made with Israel, but simply to give his people Israel a practical proof that He was the God of the heathen also, and could prepare for Himself even among them a people of his possession. (Keil and Delitzsch)

Dr. Pusey expresses himself unwarrantably, when he says: "But, what Scripture chiefly dwells upon, their repentance was not only in profession, in belief, in outward act, but in the fruit of genuine works of repentance, a changed life out of a changed heart. . . . . Their whole way and course of life was evil; they broke off, not the one or other sin only, but all, *their* whole *evil way*. Dr. P. has inserted the adjective "*whole*" before "evil way." It is not used by the sacred writer. The repentance of the Ninevites was — though in some instances, it may have been more — a public confession and humiliation ordered by the "king and his nobles." — C. E.].

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.[1]

See Introduction, p. 5 ff.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

The repentance of the Ninevites, a model of a genuine national repentance.

1. It hears God's proclamation and asks not why? vers. 1–4.
2. It springs from faith and is accompanied by faith? vers. 5, 9.
3. It bows itself under the curse of the common guilt, and not a single person asks: how much have I deserved? ver. 6. ff.
4. It is united with the purpose of amendment.

On ver. 1. The Lord does not withdraw his calls. (Comp. John xxi. 16.) It is a great and enduring grace to be called by Him. Ver. 2. No one should undertake, of his own absolute power, to threaten others with the Divine wrath and punishment. Preachers, who speak from their own mind, have no right to do so. Therefore, consider well and pray for the Holy Spirit, and entirely humble thyself, and forget thyself, if thou hast in mind to, or must perform such a duty.

Ver. 3. Whoever feels that he is sent of God should not be afraid of the greatest city. As many as the Lord intends shall hear Him, will hear Him. — Ver. 4. Speak promptly and delay not. In God's kingdom every moment is precious. The time, when He puts his word in thy mouth, is the right time; not that which thou fanciest for thyself. — Ver. 5. Because the Ninevites believed, they repented. Repentance comes not from the law alone; but from the law and faith. From the law alone comes death. Children are not innocent. — Ver. 6. It becomes a king, who takes precedence in everything, to take the lead also in repentance. (Ps. li.) In repentance and especially before God, all are on a level; purple is of no avail, but only a broken heart. Magistracy is of God's appointment; but those who possess it are nevertheless sinners. — Ver. 7. It is a good work and belongs to the office of the magistrate to foster true piety. The state has not merely the negative duty of providing that those who observe their religious festivals [*Feiertage*] be not disturbed, but also a positive duty. There is no state conceivable without having duties to discharge to religion and the church. The kingdom of God can subsist without it, but not the reverse. To repentance belongs necessarily the purpose of amendment. — Ver. 9. The heathen do not despair of God's mercy, though they do not yet know Christ. It is worse than heathenish to doubt that God is gracious and ready to forgive. — Ver. 10. The repentance of God is included in his gracious decree. It is the harmonizing of [*die Auseinandersetzung zwischen*, lit., the settlement between] wrath and forgiveness, justice and love. Wrath is not the final end; but it has for its end and object, love. Law without the Gospel would be an ungodly thing: the Old Testament cannot subsist without the New. Woe to him who makes light of the wrath of God: he can never taste of love.

LUTHER: Ver. 1. It is therefore written that we may bear in mind, that nothing is to be undertaken without God's word and command. For the first command of God having been violated by disobedience, had not God renewed it, Jonah would not have known, whether he should do it, or not. (Comp. Num xiv. 1 ff.; Deut. i. 41 f.) The Israelites at first would not fight at God's command; afterward they wished to do so of their own accord and were beaten. (1 Pet. iv. 11.) — Ver. 2. Nineveh, the city of God. God cares also for the heathen. (2 Kings v. 1; Jer. xxv. 9.) — Ver. 4. He doubtless did not confine himself in preaching to these words; his proclamation is briefly reported. — Ver. 5. They do some things, which God does not command. Therefore He, afterward, ver. 10, does not commend their fasting and sackcloth, but that they turned from their evil way. God saw their earnestness; therefore He permitted the foolish things — that the animals should fast, etc., — to be acceptable to Him, which He would not have beheld with favor, had the earnestness been wanting. Free will, or our own power, does not produce such earnestness; but faith by the power of the Holy Spirit. — Ver. 9. The king speaks as if he doubts. But he doubts not; for doubt does not call upon God and employ such earnestness. A truly penitent heart stands with fear in the contest, and fights against despair; but as it has not yet won, it speaks as if

[1] [*Reichsgedanken*, see note, p. 20. — C. E.].

it were uncertain. If there were no faith, it would not hold out amidst such toil and trouble. Therefore, words are rather a sign that faith is there. — Ver. 10. Here the works are commended; what shall we say against it? Here the legalists have the advantage, yes, a fine advantage! Look at the text. It says, God saw their works, that is, they pleased Him. But what kind of works were they? The text shows: They turned from their evil way. Such works do and teach, then we will not refuse to thee the praise of works; but we will help thee to extol them. To turn from one's evil way is not a trifling work; it includes, not fasting and sackcloth, but faith in God from the heart, and the loving of our neighbor as ourselves; that is, it requires the whole man to be pious and just in both body and soul. For God requires the whole man, and dislikes half-converts and hypocrites.

Starke: Ver. 1. God's purpose and command must succeed and be accomplished; for it cannot be hindered or frustrated by any human designs. God by means of the ministry saves sinners by sinners. — Ver. 2. God even during the time of the Old Covenant, sought the salvation of the heathen. — Ver. 3. Nineveh, a great city to the Lord, should surely have been devoted to God: God had wrought for it (iv. 10). Παθήματα, μαθήματα, *nocumenta, documenta*, poor in spirit, rich in faith (*armselig macht gottselig*, Is. xxviii. 19). God can well tolerate great cities, if they only give place to Him and his word. — Ver. 4. Since God has still his own everywhere, these most likely were the first to have been awakened, and to have served as coadjutors in the preaching of repentance. — Ver. 5. *Credidit Ninive et Israel incredulus perseverat; credidit præputium, et circumcisio permanet infidelis.* Where the Word of God is preached sincerely and purely, there it brings fruit in its season, if not in all, at least in some. (1 Thess. ii. 13.) Jonah did in his mission, as did the Apostles. Wherever they came, they did not seek first permission from the magistrate; but they rested [their authority] upon the command of Christ. — Ver. 7. It is well for the masses of a community, when pious magistrates have also pious servants around them. It is a strong proof of sincere repentance for sins committed to remove every occasion to lust out of the way. — Ver. 8. One must prove his repentance by external acts. It is a peculiar instance of Divine justice that God suffered Israel to be destroyed by the same people, who repented at the voice of his prophet, while on the contrary, the Israelites had despised all the prophets from Samuel down. God's decree has always a fundamental reference to conversion [*hat die Ordnung der Bekehrung immer zum Grunde*].

Pfaff: God does not change his commands. He repeats his calling grace. He calls the sinner twice, thrice, yea, even to the end. — Ver. 4: A preacher must speak the truth frankly [*deutsch*], and not sugar it over and deprive it of its power by ornaments and flattery. One must plainly say to sinners that they are hastening to destruction. — Ver. 7. Here we find established the right of the magistrate in spiritual things; especially in regard to the externals of Divine worship and its right ordering. — Vers. 9, 10. It is certain that God bestows his grace upon the penitent.

Quandt: Ver. 1. With God nothing is impossible. Truly, the heart must suffer itself to be broken, otherwise even God cannot break it by his Almighty power. The same word of God, which was rejected and despised by us in former times, is received by us with devotion, when it comes to us the second time and we in the meantime have become different persons. Many individuals and families want nothing but the cross to bring them back. — Ver. 3. Alas! Jonah has more followers in the way of flight than in the way of obedience. — Ver. 4. Three ways may be pursued on receiving such a terrible message — despair, frivolous mockery, repentance and conversion. The Ninevites chose the third. — Ver. 9. Faith disappoints nobody. — Ver. 10. That Nineveh was converted was a wonder. With us, it is a wonder, if we are not converted.

Marck: Ver. 1. God is so good and so indulgent to the weaknesses of his servants, that even after repeated proofs of his grace, He makes known his will to them, not once, but oftener, in order that they may have no pretext of ignorance, but may know the true object of their redemption, namely, to obey the commands of their Redeemer and to manifest his glory.

Burck: God does not utterly reject him, who has failed once; but He rather gives him a new opportunity of correcting former faults.

Rieger: To him, who comes out of trouble, danger, and sickness, God commonly permits an opportunity soon to occur, when he can pay his vows.

Schlier: In renewing the command, God says not a word about the guilt of Jonah; for Jonah is humbled. In the miracle of his deliverance he has learned what obedience is, although he does not yet know what Divine compassion toward the perishing heathen is.

Burck: Ver. 4. Preaching is usually efficacious, from the very first, among those who do not receive the Word in vain. There is very little hope of those, who have heard the Word of God proclaimed by the same messenger, not merely many days, but years, without becoming better, even if they should have the opportunity of hearing the same preaching a thousand years.

Marck: Ver. 5. There is not only a very close connection between evil, guilt, and punishment, so that they are commonly mutually dependent, but also the good is connected by intimate bonds, since from one virtue of one man other virtues of others flow, and the Divine blessing follows virtue. This is illustrated by the obedience of Jonah, with which the repentance of the Ninevites and the Divine compassion were closely connected.

Rieger: The exercises of repentance are here described for the most part by the outward circumstances that accompanied them, — quite different from what is practiced at the present day, when one would perform the several acts of repentance, devotion, and prayer, in such a quiet way as to be scarcely perceived by those who are nearest about him. But where there is genuine earnestness within, there the outward manifestation is not so readily suppressed.

Burck: Ver. 6. There is a difference between a court, which is a stranger to the true religion, and one that is attached to it in only a hypocritical way. The former is more easily moved; the latter, in consequence of God's decree, is more hardened.

Bochart: Ver. 7. This edict, issued to the Ninevites, in order to appease the anger of God; the edict of Darius (Dan. vi. 26 ff.); that of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iii. 20), and others, were just so many preparations for the conversion of the heathen, which followed the advent of Christ. In

this way God's goodness and glory became gradually, and in a certain measure, known to the nations, which were strangers to Israel (Exodus v. 2).

SCHMIEDER: Ver. 8. The understanding may call the penitential acts on the part of the beasts foolish; but the heart will seize upon them, because they show deep contrition of heart; and this is certainly the main point here.

HIERONYMUS: Ver. 10. God soon changed his purpose, because He saw that their works were changed. He did not hear words, such as Israel was wont to say: "All that God has said will we do" (Ex. xix. 8; xxiv. 3); but He saw works. He will rather that the ungodly turn from their evil way, than that they should die. (Ez. xviii. 23, 32).

TALMUD: Dear brethren, sackcloth and fasting avail nothing; but repentance and good works. For it is not said of the Ninevites, etc.

BURCK: How far are God's thoughts removed from the thoughts of man, even from the thoughts of men, who seem unto others to be sound in the faith.

RIEGER: The Lord Jesus bears testimony to this repentance of the people of Nineveh (Matth. xii. 14), that, in its good consequences, it will extend to the day of judgment; and hence, in sparing them, God must have been sincerely and kindly in earnest. But because Nineveh fell back into its former sins, it was overthrown by the wrath of Jehovah scarcely a century after this salutary conversion: so also it befell Jerusalem, because it did not acknowledge and receive Him, of whom Jonah was a type.

[CALVIN: Ver. 3. *He went*, then, *according to the command of Jehovah;* that is, nothing else did he regard but to render obedience to God, and to suffer himself to be wholly ruled by him. We hence learn how well God provides for us and for our salvation, when he corrects our perverseness; though sharp may be our chastisements, yet as this benefit follows, we know that nothing is better for us than to be humbled under God's hand, as David says in Ps. 119. — Ver. 10. *God had respect to their works* — what works? not sackcloth, not ashes, not fasting; for Jonah does not now mention these; but he had respect to their works, because they turned from their evil way.

FAIRBAIRN: "Why should God have sent his prophet to admonish us of sin, and foretell his approaching judgment, a prophet, too, who has himself been the subject of singular mercy and forbearance? If destruction alone had been his object, would he not rather have allowed us to sleep on in our sinfulness? And why, in particular, should these forty days have been made to run between our doom and our punishment? Surely this bespeaks some thought of mercy in God; it must have been meant to leave the door still open to us for forgiveness and peace." So undoubtedly they reasoned, and, as the event proved, reasoned justly.

PUSEY: Ver. 10. *And he did it not.* God willed rather that his prophecy should seem to fail, than that repentance should fail of its fruit. But it did not indeed fail, for the condition lay expressed in the threat.

COWLES: Ver. 10. Works meet for repentance will infallibly secure the reversal of threatened and impending doom. God's immutability is that of principle — not of plan and action. He immutably hates and punishes sin: hence, when a sinner becomes a penitent, God turns from threatened vengeance to free pardon. — C. E.]

CHAPTER IV.

[*Jonah repines at God's Mercy to the Ninevites. God employs a Palmchrist as a means to reprove and instruct him.* — C. E.]

1 2 But [And] it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.[1] And he
prayed unto [to] the Lord [Jehovah], and said: I pray thee [Ah! now], O Lord
[Jehovah], *was* not this my saying, when [while] I was yet in my country?
Therefore I fled before [I anticipated *it* by fleeing] unto Tarshish: for I knew that
thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and
3 repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord [And now, O Jehovah] take,
I beseech thee, my life from me; for *it is* better for me to die than to live [my
4 death is better than my life]. Then [And] said the Lord [Jehovah said], Doest
5 thou well to be angry?[2] So [And] Jonah went[3] out of the city, and sat on the east
side of the city, and there made him [for himself] a booth, and sat under it in the
6 shadow [shade], till he might [should] see what would become of the city. And the
Lord [Jehovah] God prepared a gourd [palmchrist] and made *it* to come up over
Jonah, that it might be [to be] a shadow [shade] over his head, to deliver him from
7 his grief [distress]. So [And] Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. But God
prepared [appointed] a worm when the morning rose [at the rising of the dawn]
8 the next day, and it smote the gourd [palmchrist] [so] that it withered. And it
came to pass, when the sun did arise [at the rising of the sun], that God prepared
[appointed] a vehement [sultry] east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah,

that [and] he fainted, and wished in himself [asked his soul, *i. e.*, asked for him-
self] to die, and said, *It is* better for me to die than to live [my death is better
9 than my life]. And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well [is it right] to be angry
for the gourd [palmchrist]? And he said, I do well [It is right] to be angry, *even*
10 unto death. Then [And] said the Lord [Jehovah], Thou hast had pity on [wast
grieved for] the gourd [palmchrist], for the which [on which] thou hast not
labored, neither madest it [and which thou hast not caused to] grow; which came[4]
11 up in a night [which was the son of a night], and perished in a night: And
should not I spare [have pity upon] Nineveh, that great city, wherein [in which]
are more than sixscore thousand persons, that cannot discern [distinguish] be-
tween their right hand and their left hand; and *also* [*omit*, also] much cattle.[5]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1.—וַיִּחַר לוֹ [anger] *was kindled to him*, i. e., *he was angry*. Sometimes this formula expresses the feeling of grief, sadness. In the Hithpa. the verb signifies to fret one's self, Ps. xxxvii. 1, 7, 8. The LXX. sometimes render it by *λυπέομαι*, iv. 4.

[2 Ver. 4.—הַהֵיטֵב חָרָה לָךְ, Keil and Delitzsch: "Is thine anger justly kindled?" Henderson: "Art thou much vexed"? הַהֵיטֵב is used adverbially. Compare Deut. ix. 21; xiii. 15; and 2 Kings xi. 18. LXX.: *Εἰ σφόδρα λελύπησαι σύ*; Vulgate: *Putasne, bene irasceris tu?*

[3 Ver. 5.—The verbs in this verse may be rendered in the pluperfect: "Jonah had gone . . . . had sat . . . . had made . . . . and had sat under." Newcome and Kleinert so render them. See the Exegetical and Critical notes on the verse.

[4 Ver. 10.—שֶׁבִּן־לַיְלָה הָיָה וּבִן־לַיְלָה אָבָד, literally, which was the son of a night, and perished the son of a night. בִּן, *a son*, is used idiomatically to express what is produced, or exists, during the time predicated of it.

[5 Ver. 11.—In Nineveh, and also in Babylon, there were probably large spaces where cattle fed.—C. E.]

EXEGETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Jonah's Discontent and Correction. This chapter does not form, as Ch. B. Michaelis thinks, two dialogues between God and Jonah; but as is evident from the retrospective reference of ver. 8 to ver. 3, and as the translation shows, ver. 5 f. gives the scenery for the preceding verses, and these verses presuppose that Jonah must have already gone out of Nineveh, sat a long time in his observatory, and waited in vain for the destruction of the city. For he does not complain because the Ninevites repented, but because God had already shown Himself merciful toward them. (Comp. below at ver. 3; and the solution of the difficulty from the idiom and literary character of the book, Introduction, p. 8.

Ver. 1. He was, therefore, already sitting in the glowing heat of the sun, when the discontent, ver. 1, came over him. The verb רַע is used here of the feeling, in a metaphorical sense, *It seemed evil to him*, which is usually accompanied in other places by the additional clause, *in his eyes*. [Same as here, Neh. ii. 10; xiii. 8; only with לְ instead of אֶל]. He was not angry because he had pondered in his mind the dangers, which were destined to come upon his country and people, in the future, through the Assyrians, who had just been delivered (Abarbanel); nor because he had seen the final doom of the Jews and heathen prefigured by the acceptance of the repentance of Nineveh contrasted with the impenitence of Israel (Hieron.); (this God would have corrected in another way); but his displeasure, as Calvin justly admitted, arose from a common littleness of mind incident to humanity, which, for the moment, thought only of his mortified honor as a prophet; and because the lie had apparently been given to his prediction, he entirely forgot that the life and death of hundreds of thousands were involved in its fulfillment. There is no intimation in the text that he envied the heathen the divine mercy and wished the destruction of Nineveh, either from ardent love to his people (Hengstenberg), or from a wrong notion of God (Keil following Luther), though such a feeling might have influenced him as a secondary motive. Rather his notion of God was in nowise perverted, for he must have known from the law [Torah] (Ex. xxxiv. 6), and he did know (ver. 2), that God *is merciful and gracious, long-suffering and rich in mercy;* and the whole of the second verse is spoken out of ill humor that he had been sent, not with the object of delivering a prophecy that was to be fulfilled, but of delivering one that was revoked, which was intended as a means of repentance.

As above i. 12, so also here, ver. 2. Jonah's wrong disposition of heart does not prevent his mouth from speaking the whole truth of God. Office and word, apart from the person, his weaknesses, and sins, are, according to the Scripture conception, intimately connected with one another. (Compare the striking example, John xi. 50 f.). Jonah, it is said, **prayed to Jehovah.** "*Necesse est in hac Jonæ precatione aliquid agnoscere pietatis et simul multa vitia.*" (Calvin.) It is true that when he fled to Tarshish he did not say that he would not prophesy because of the mercy of God (comp. at i. 3); but it is quite human to palliate an originally unreasonably undertaken step by motives drawn from wisdom subsequently acquired, or from fortunate accident. **Therefore I anticipated**—*προέφθασα*, LXX.—the errand, whose fruitlessness I foresaw, **and fled to Tarshish.** These, of course, were not his words, when he fled to Tarshish, that he was unwilling to prophesy, because of the mercy of God (comp. i. 3); but it is human nature to color an undertaking, for which originally no reasons can in truth be assigned, with the reasons derived from a more recently acquired wisdom, or from the event. The infinitive with לְ is gerundial. The phrase "in my country," is an important element for the sym-

bolical interpretation of the book. (See above, p. 5; comp. Jer. lii. 27).

As in chap. 3 the fifth verse gave a brief summary of the longer statement which follows; so here vers. 3, 4, are in part the literal quintessence of the following detailed account. Vers. 5–7, as a commentary to be added by way of supplement to ver. 1 ff. give the moving cause (Jonah, to wit, had, etc.); and the more exact psychological understanding of ver. 3 results from ver. 8.

The non-consideration of the forty days belongs to the symbolical character of the narrative, which cares more for the essential circumstances than for the chronology; and, in any case, it furnishes no reason to assume with Keil, that ver. 1 ff. should be placed within the forty days and during Jonah's sojourn in the city, and that ver. 5 ff. should be placed after. Jonah was certain that the punishment was revoked, consequently the expiration of the time is presupposed in ver. 1 as in ver. 5; and it is neither probable that Jonah should wait in the city for the threatened destruction, nor that, after the completion of the time, within which the Spirit had instructed him to announce it, he should then go out of the city and wait for it. If Calvin remarks in favor of the latter supposition: "*Etsi enim præterierant quadraginta dies, Jonas tamen quasi constrictus stetit, quia nondum poterat statuere, quod prius ex mandato Dei protulerat carere suo effectu*," then, on the other hand, it may be observed that he was only too ready to maintain the latter, according to ver. 2, and that the עַד ver. 5, "till he might see," indicates a state, not of consternation, but of easy expectation. We accordingly abide by the rendering of ver. 4 in the pluperfect tense, the grammatical probability of which even Keil cannot deny, and the necessity of which is also acknowledged by Starke, Ch. B. Mich., Hitzig, and others; only that we should not restrict the same to ver. 4 exclusively, but extend it to the verses immediately following till ver. 8.

[Ver. 5. "This verse regarded by many commentators as a supplementary remark, וַיֵּצֵא, with the verbs which follow, being rendered in the pluperfect: 'Jonah had gone out of the city,' etc. We grant that this is grammatically admissible, but it cannot be shown to be necessary, and is indeed highly improbable. If, for instance, Jonah went out of Nineveh before the expiration of the forty days, to wait for the fulfillment of his prophecy, in a hut to the east of the city, he could not have been angry at its non-fulfillment before the time arrived, nor could God have reproved him for his anger before that time. The divine correction of the dissatisfied prophet, which is related in vers. 6–11, cannot have taken place till the forty days had expired. But this correction is so closely connected with Jonah's departure from the city and settlement to the east of it, to wait for the final decision as to its fate (ver. 5), that we cannot possibly separate it, so as to take the verbs in ver. 5 as pluperfects, or those in vers. 6–11 as historical imperfects. There is no valid ground for so forced an assumption as this. As the expression וַיִּרַע אֶל יוֹנָה in ch. iv. 1, which is appended to וְלֹא עָשָׂה in ch. iii. 10, shows that Jonah did not become irritated and angry till after God had failed to carry out his threat concerning Nineveh, and that it was then he poured out his discontent in a reproachful prayer to God (ver. 2), there is nothing whatever to force us to the assumption that Jonah had left Nineveh before the fortieth day. Jonah had no reason to be afraid of perishing with the city. If he had faith, which we cannot deny, he could rely upon it that God would not order him, his own servant, to perish with the ungodly, but when the proper time was arrived, would direct him to leave the city. But when forty days elapsed, and nothing occurred to indicate the immediate or speedy fall of the city, and he was reproved by God for his anger on that account in these words, 'Art thou rightly or justly angry?' the answer from God determined him to leave the city and wait outside, in front of it, to see what fate would befall it. For since this answer still left it open, as a possible thing, that the judgment might burst upon the city, Jonah interpreted it in harmony with his own inclination, as signifying that the judgment was only postponed, not removed, and therefore resolved to wait in a hut outside the city, and watch for the issue of the whole affair." (Keil and Delitzsch.)

Dr. Pusey is inclined to Keil's opinion. Henderson, to that of our author. Newcome renders the verbs, וַיֵּצֵא, etc., ver. 5, *had gone*, *had sat*, etc. — C. E.]

5. **But Jonah had gone out of the city and had sat down east of the city** — on one of the mountains eastward, which border on the valley of the Tigris, from which the city spreads out over the valley to the river. [Here he made a hut, or a booth, and sat in its shade, "till he might see what would become of the city." — C. E.]

Ver. 6. As the fish, so also the ricinus plant obeyed the command of God: **He appointed it.** (Ps. civ. 30). The *kikayon*[1] is, according to Hieronymus, the *kiki* of the Egyptians (Herod., ii. 94), the *kik* of the Rabbins, the *el-keroa* of the Arabs, the *κρότων* of the Greeks. Besides Hieronymus, Pliny, h. iv. 15, 7, mentions the Ricinus plant, which grows wild in Arabia, Egypt, and Syria, and shoots up rapidly to the height of a tree. It has at first a herbaceous, then a woody stem, hollow within, full of knots and joints; large petiolate, peltate leaves, which, according to Niebuhr, when broken off, or injured, wither in a few minutes, and which are moreover liable to perish quickly, from the fact that, in a gentle rain, black caterpillars, or worms (תּוֹלַעַת, ver. 7), of a middling size, are produced on them, which strip the plant of all its foliage in a single night. (Niebuhr, *Description of Arabia*, p. 148. Rumpf, *Herb. Amboin*, iv. 95.) Such a plant God caused to shoot up, about the time when Jonah was thoroughly convinced of the fruitlessness of his waiting, and when he had already given vent to his ill humor (רָעָה), in order to recover him from

1 ["Augustine, following the LXX. and Syr. versions, was in favor of the rendering *gourd*, which was adopted by Luther, the A. V., etc. In Jerome's description of the plant called in Syr. *karo*, and Punic *el-keroa*, Celsius recognizes the Ricinus. Palma Christi, or castor-oil plant (Hierobot., ii. 278 ff.; Bochart. *Hieroz.*, ii. 293, 623). The Ricinus was seen by Niebuhr (*Descript. of Arab.*, p. 148) at Bosra, where it was distinguished by the name *el-keroa*; by Rauwulf (*Trav.*, p. 52), it was noticed in great abundance near Tripoli, where the Arabs called it *el-kerua*; while both Hasselquist and Robinson observed very large specimens of it in the neighborhood of Jericho ("*Ricinus in altitudinem arboris insignis*," Hasselq., p 555; see also Robins., i. 553). Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. "Gourd." — C. E.]

his discontent.[1] (ל instead of the acc. Ew., sec. 292 e.).

This succeeds. To his great petulance, ver. 1, soon succeeds great joy.

Ver. 7. **A worm** (the sing. used collectively, as in Deut. xxviii. 39), comes at the command of God, during the night—**at the rising of the sun, next morning.** (Comp. Gen. xix. 15, 23.) **And it smote,** destroyed (Am. iv. 9) **the plant, so that it withered.** And as if this were not enough, God, to attain his disciplinary purpose with Jonah, appointed, in the third place, ver. 8, the *silent*, that is, the deadly sultry east wind, whose scorching heat is proverbial throughout the Old Testament (Ez. xvii. 10). The glowing heat of the sun beat upon Jonah, **so that he fainted** (Amos viii. 13), was out of his mind. Then were suggested those petulant words, that we have already heard, ver. 3: **he wished in himself to die,** literally, he asked as to his soul to die (acc. c. inf. 1 Kings xix. 4; Is. liii. 10; Ew., sec. 336 b), **and said, it is better for me to die than to live.** Ch. B. Mich.: "*Præstat me mori, quam sic vivere.*"

Ver. 9. **And God said to Jonah: Dost thou right to be angry for the gourd?** namely, on account of its destruction. הַהֵיטֵב is not used adverbially (Keil), but as an auxiliary construed with the impersonal 3 sing. חרה (comp. Deut. v. 25). The short question: Dost thou well to be angry? comprised within itself, by aposiopesis at ver. 3 above, the whole dialogue, vers. 9–11; here it is analyzed into its elements.

Jonah answers: **I do right to be angry, even unto death,** that is, to the bottom of my soul, even to weariness of life. (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 38.) God now convicted him from his own words (comp. Matt. xii. 37; Luke xix. 22), how wrong was his whole anger, in which this momentary vexation only forms an element with a fresh stimulus, but which had its origin in the sparing of Nineveh, by a conclusion *a minori ad majus*.

Ver 10. **Thou art grieved for the gourd, for which thou hast not labored . . . . and perished.** Bin-lailah, a son of the night, of a night's duration. (Comp. Ex. xii. 5, and the Syriac translation of Deut. xxiv. 15.) It is evident from ver. 10, why a rapidly growing plant should shoot up over Jonah. If it had been of slow growth, he would have watered and nursed it; consequently the reproof would not have been so forcible. [בִּן instead of בֶּן on account of the following liquids, Num. xiv. 38.]

Ver. 11. **And should not I . . . . who cannot distinguish between the right hand and the left** (ידע *sensu prægnanti*, as in 2 Sam. xix. 36 [35 A. V.]), who cannot consequently be very guilty; **and besides much cattle,** which are not guilty at all, and which are of much greater worth than a ricinus plant? By the 120,000 mentioned in the relative clause, must be understood young children (comp. Is. vii. 15). The limit of this period of life, in the East (*e. g.*, among the Persians), is usually the seventh year. If we assume the ratio, fixed by statistics, of those under seven years of age to the whole number of the population as 1 : 5, we have for all Nineveh the not improbable number of 600,000 inhabitants. This would give, as in the province of Naples, 40,000 persons to the square [German] mile (comp. at i. 2). The English Admiral Jones, from a survey of the extent of the ruins, without any reference to the statement in this verse, has estimated the population of the city, at about the same number. (Comp. *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, vol. xv. p. 29. M. v Niebuhr, *Assyria and Babylon*, p. 278 f.)

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.[2]

See Introduction, p. 6.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Jonah, a type of the misery and vanity of the human heart. (Homily).

1. The impatience of the human heart compared with the long-suffering of God. When God forgives, it is angry. When God is patient, it is impatient, ver. 1. And yet Jonah, too, was saved only by grace.

2. The idea of its own honor compared with the great heart of God, who readily foregoes his own honor, when the salvation of men is concerned (iii. 10). But Jonah would have preferred that all men should perish, that his office and vocation should be relinquished, to the mortification of the idea of his own honor, ver. 2, a.

3. Its bitterness compared with the kindness of God. God speaks comfort; but the human heart extracts from his consolatory words a sting, ver. 2, b.

4. And so inconsiderate is the human heart of the most precious gifts, even of life itself, that on account of the empty shadow of honor, it even thinks that it should despise its own life, ver. 3 But how seriously does God speak of death.

5. In short, how little can the heart, notwithstanding all instruction, dive into the deep thoughts of God! And yet, at the same time, it is always ready to maintain that it is right against God, vers. 1–3.

6. In such miserable selfishness, it is destitute of all love, and lurks for the ruin of others; it wishes that others should be judged and judges them itself; but it does not like to judge itself.

7. It always has only real pleasure in that which happens to its advantage; and should it be something of the most trifling importance, it is more highly prized by it than all the great mercy vouchsafed to others, vers. 6, 7.

8. Therefore, is life full of misery. For these short pleasures, on account of which we neglect the eternal good, soon come to an end. And we do not afterward think that they were favors for which we ought to be thankful, however transient they may have been; but imagine that they were our own, that we had a right to them and therefore a right to complain, ver. 8. And what bitter complaints! 2 Cor. iv. 17.

9. And if God's ways are ever so clear before our eyes, yet our eyes are closed that we cannot

1 That רָעָה has reference to the ill humor of the prophet ver. 1, is, considering the simple tenor of the narrative, which does not hinder that ver. 5 ff. must be considered as preceding ver. 1, most probable. We cannot well think of the physical illness produced by the glowing heat of the sun: the suffix points too definitely to an already known evil. It would rather be possible to view the matter, in such a way that the whole perverted condition of the prophet's soul is meant by רָעָה, which God intended to cure by means of the ricinus, or rather by the lesson connected with its withering. By this the difficulty mentioned before would also be solved.

2 [*Reichsgedanken.* See note, p. 20.—C. E.]

perceive them, and we will continually grope in darkness, unless God open our eyes by his spirit, vers. 9–11.

Ver. 1. Here we see how it would be, if God would allow each one his own will. It is well that He alone sits at the helm. God's messengers are in great danger of forgetting that they are messengers and that they act merely under authority. The sinful heart is ever ready to act the Lord, and it wonders when it is forsaken by God. — Ver. 2. There are even wicked prayers. It is not a mark of piety, therefore, to disburden one's heart before God, but to pray in the name of Jesus, according to the pattern of Luke xxii. 42. Man is always eloquent in exculpating himself. If the heart is in a wrong state, it distorts God's Word, and applies it according to its own pleasure. — Ver. 3. Suppose the Lord had taken Jonah at his word? How inconsiderately does a man speak, who does not bridle his tongue. The sorrow of the world works death. — Ver. 5. Some say that God, out of respect to his justice, has delight in viewing the punishment of the lost; that Abraham also, when Lazarus lay in his bosom, reveled in God's pleasure in the torment of the rich man. These look upon God and Abraham in the same light that they do upon the prophet Jonah. (Luke ix. 55.) His heart even breaks for the souls of the condemned, and if they would be saved, He would save them. (Matt. xii. 31.) — Ver. 6. The creature was made for men; and the death of the creature is, in every way, instructive to men. To a heart devoid of peace, the good gifts of God are only a source of vexation. — Ver. 7. "When the morning rose"! Often, at the moment when every thing seems to smile, misfortune is on the way. With the rising star of fortune comes also always a misfortune, even though we do not see it at the moment. Hence the injunction to be always prepared, always humble. — Ver. 11. At first sight, it appears as if common guilt and sin were denied in this verse, since God speaks of the children, as if they, like the cattle, did not deserve punishment. But He says only that the severe punishment, which Jonah expected, was not deserved by these relatively to many others, whose death Jonah himself would not desire. The fact that the Ninevites were spared on account of their repentance, would have been sufficient to reprove him for this (Ez. xviii. 23); but God would bring before the eyes of Jonah his uncharitableness in that he did not consider the relatively innocent and harmless creatures in his blind zeal to see vile sinners perish. The Scriptures have regard for beasts also. (Deut. xxii. 6; Rom. viii. 18 ff.) These have no part in the sin of man, but in his punishment. As they appear here by their participation in the repentance of the Ninevites, so at other times, in the Old Testament, they appear by their blood for the curse of sin. Yet this is only a shadow of things to come.

Luther: How can such a state of grace and such untoward conduct in Jonah be consistent with one another? We cannot deny that he was unreasonably angry, and did wrong, for God punished him for it. We must also acknowledge that he had faith and was acceptable to God, because God spoke so kindly with him and gave him a sign. We should observe from these facts (1) how wonderfully God deals with his saints, so that no one may inconsiderately judge or condemn any one on account of works alone. (2.) We should learn, how God permits his dear children to act very foolishly and commit grave faults, as Christ did with the Apostles, in the Gospel, for the consolation of all believers who sometimes sin and fall. (3.) We should see how kindly, fatherly, and amiably God deals with and treats those, who confide in Him in trouble. It is a daily sinning on the part of his children, which the Father graciously suffers. With the ungodly He does not deal thus: they cannot reconcile themselves to his dealings, but are altogether insolent and intractable.

Starke: Ver. 1. Even well-meaning minds can fall into an indiscreet zeal for God and criticise his wise government according to their weak and sordid ideas, although they do not break out into open murmurs against Him. — Ver. 2. To excuse sin, which deserves punishment, is presumptuousness. — Ver 3. There is a great difference between a well-regulated desire for a happy departure from this world and one that is inordinate and self-willed, which arises from impatience, and, alas, often enters into well-disposed minds. — Ver. 4. As often as thou art provoked to be angry, ask thyself at once, am I justly angry? Teachers should be moderate in their zeal and seek to restore the erring by friendly words: the example of God admonishes them to this. — Ver. 6. God has always been accustomed to guide men by external things and visible signs to the consideration of heavenly things. Hieronymus hits upon the thought that the Jewish people, who have sat under the shadow of ordinances and ceremonies are hereby represented. — Ver. 7. Even the very least animals must serve the powerful government of God. — Ver. 8. We must not be too much delighted by our success nor too much distressed by our misfortune. — Ver. 9. One must really be astonished at God's love to men, manifested in his patience with his servants. Jonah is nothing else but a little, naughty, spoiled child.— Ver. 10. God has pity upon little children. He loves them tenderly, numbers them exactly, and oftentimes spares old people on their account, whom He would otherwise destroy on account of their sins. Did God love the little children in Nineveh so well, and was He pleased to spare the city on their account, then how can he reject those, who are born in Christendom, but die without baptism?

Pfaff: Ver. 1. Men are much more wrathful and vindictive than God; for God soon repents of the punishment, provided men comply with the condition of repentance.—Ver. 4. Even prophets commit faults. Guard thyself against impatience, and learn composedness and self-denial. Nothing adorns the conduct more, than entire self-abnegation and submission to the will of the Lord, combined with efforts to accomplish it. What a dreadful thing ambition is! To wish rather to die than to be humbled! It must not be so, but thou must willingly bow and humble thyself, if God's honor is thereby advanced.—Ver. 8. Let no one wish for death from a desire to escape the cross.

Quandt: Ver. 1. There is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repents; among us there is joy at the success of the mission; with Jonah there is indignation. This did not arise from the circumstance that the repentance of Nineveh was not sincere and honest; but Jonah's own repentance was not sincere. He had retained the principal part of his old man at his conversion. — Ver. 3. Even other holy men have had such dark hours. (Num. xi. 15; Job vii. 15 f.; 1 Kings xix.) Notwithstanding Jonah's preaching had the proper effect. The faith of the preacher does not work faith in the hearers, but the preaching of faith. — Ver. 5. The word of God, ver. 4, was de

signed to convince the prophet of how little reason there was for his anger; but it had exactly the opposite effect. He explained it in his own favor; as if God meant to say: Wait yet a little; and he goes forth to wait. The piety of the heathen is a matter of total indifference to him, but curiosity and a mischievous delight in the miseries of others abide with him. This is instructive to Christians in their relation to the missionary cause. — Ver. 8. Before, Jonah was angry at God's mercy; now he is angry at his seeming unmercifulness. This is a movement in the right direction There is instruction connected with this. — Ver. 11. The old, obstinate Jonah has displayed himself enough in this book; now, at the close, he vanishes, and God, in the end, stands, with his word, alone and majestic: the new Jonah is lost in Him.

Marck: Ver. 1. Although all the works of God are entirely irreprehensible, yet there is not one among them, which may not be censured by some one; and the degree of censure is in proportion to the want of understanding on the part of the fault-finder.

Rieger: Before we find fault with Jonah, we should consider well first what would be the result if we were to describe our thoughts and feelings concerning many events in the government of God as frankly as Jonah does here. The worst is that our wickedness remains hidden in us, and we conceal it from ourselves and others. We must also judge Jonah according to his times and temptations; for it could easily be that a man of God should have little regard for the heathen, since Peter, in New Testament times, had to be instructed concerning them. Moreover the solicitude that the Ninevites, inexperienced in the ways of God, might turn his long suffering into contempt and despise his threatenings, was not unfounded. In our estimate in general of the faults and offenses of others, it should be borne in mind, that God knows how our temper exposes us on the one hand to peculiar temptations, but also on the other makes us useful for some purpose; hence no one should cling to the defects of others, but should in advance turn to good account the good qualities with which they are endowed. The vehement disposition of Jonah had plunged him into these faults, but what useful purpose this very disposition served in his office, must not be forgotten. That is a wicked art of our hearts, of which Solomon says, The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason: namely he who never undertakes anything, commits, after his way of thinking, fewer faults, and is well pleased with his own conceit.

Burck: Ver. 2. Thou hast not to consider what God will accomplish by thee, or without thee, but what He requires of thee and what becomes thee. God bears with much murmuring and impatience on the part of his servants. — Ver. 3. Jonah did not pray for the destruction of the Ninevites, but for his own death. They are the readiest to do this, who know least the severity of God in the sentence of death. But Jonah has already endured a tenfold death in the sea. And now zeal for his office and for the honor attached to it by God presses upon him to such a degree that he wishes rather to die than to live. But God can require an offering from us such as He pleases: He did not now require the surrender of Jonah's life, but a patient waiting; and therefore Jonah found another kind of death and of a more salutary sort, than if God had taken his life away [in answer to his prayer]. — Ver. 6. The best way to refute a murmurer consists not in arguments, but in deeds.

Marck: God does not always lead sinners in the same manner to the right way; but at one time by severe chastisements, at another by kindness in word, or deed.

Coccerus: We always think that our affliction is something sacred, and yet it is often worldly; for how often are we obliged to see that it is mitigated by worldly consolation!

Rieger: Ver. 7 ff. With others we often think that a word and a remonstrance should be enough; but in our case we experience, that we first became acquainted with ourselves under the actual dispensations of God, and thus too are made thoroughly healthy. Such is the vanity of our heart that it can be made glad and be troubled about trifling things. And yet God uses this experience in us as a means of discipline. If we are too much delighted with a gourd, He knows that nothing more than a worm-hole is required to sober us again.

Burck: Ver. 11. The book begins and closes with the words of God. Jonah is silent, and imitates, without doubt, the example of Job. (Job xl. 3 f.)

[Matthew Henry: Ver. 1. Jonah was *mirabilis homo*, as one calls him, an amazing man; the strangest, oddest, and most out-of-the-way man, for a good man and a prophet, as one shall ever hear or read of.

Pusey: Ver. 2. Jonah, at least, did not murmur or complain of God. He complained to God of himself. — Ver. 3. Impatient though he was, he still cast himself upon God. By asking of God to end his life, he, at least, committed himself to the sovereign disposal of God.

Keil: Children who cannot distinguish between right and left, cannot distinguish good from evil, and are not yet accountable.

Cowles: Ver. 2. It is awful that a sinner, plucked himself as a brand from the burning, and living on mercy alone, should object to God's showing the same mercy to his fellow sinners. — Ver. 11. Who can estimate the amount of sparing mercy which the guilty of our world owe, in this life, to God's pity for infants and for the sentient but unsinning animal races? — C. E.]

THE BOOK OF MICAH.

EXPOUNDED

BY

PAUL KLEINERT,

PASTOR AT ST. GERTRAUD, AND PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, WITH ADDITIONS

BY

GEORGE R. BLISS, D. D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY AT LEWISBURG, PENN.

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MICAH.

INTRODUCTION.

1. *Historical Situation and Date.*

LIKE Isaiah, Micah also belongs to the great critical period in the latter half of the eighth century before Christ. At that time, the Assyrian kingdom, just prior to its fall, recovered its power, under Salmanassar, and with irresistible might carried the profound commotions of God's judgments, predicted by Amos, chapters i. and ii., over the peoples of Western Asia, and even to Africa. His activity, also, like Isaiah's, belongs to the kingdom of Judah, and numerous coincidences show the close proximity, in time and character, of these two mightiest of the prophets (compare esp. Mic. ii. 11; iii. 5 ff., 12; iv. 1 ff.; v. 2 ff. with Is. xxviii. 7; xxix. 9 ff.; xxxii. 13 ff.; ii. 2 ff.; vii. 14; ix. 15). Yet the historical horizon of his prophecies is narrower than that of Isaiah. Concerning this we have an express statement in Jer. xxvi. 18. It is there argued by certain elders of Judah, that Jeremiah should not be held blameworthy for the hard prophecies which the Spirit impelled him to utter, but be left unharmed, and receive honor rather, on the ground that the good king Hezekiah did not punish Micah's sharp threatenings against Judah, but received them with fear and humiliation before God. In proof of this the passage in ch. iii. 12 of our book is cited. Now, since there is nothing to prove that the discourses which are collected in our book were composed at different times, since rather chaps. 1–5 in particular form a beautiful and consistent whole, we are obliged to fix the date of the book under Hezekiah, 727–698. This determination of the time is supported by the fact that just in those chapters (i.–iii.) in which it has been supposed there were indications of a period earlier than Hezekiah, the coincidences with Isaiah relate, without exception, to discourses of his delivered under Hezekiah.

Still more definitely can the period be ascertained from intimations given by our book itself. For, *first*, idolatry, which had become triumphantly prevalent under Hezekiah's predecessors, particularly Ahaz (2 K. xvi.; 2 Chr. xxviii.), appears here throughout as still unbroken in Judah (v. 11 ff.; i. 5; vi. 16). But Hezekiah, not long after the destruction of the northern kingdom by Salmanassar (Sargon), and in connection with the great Passover, by which he sought to attach the remaining inhabitants of that kingdom to Judah (2 Chr. xxxvi. 6), extirpated idolatry. Not less clearly, in the *second* place, is the early portion of his reign pointed to by the circumstance that in Micah we find a corruption of the higher classes especially, and of the official dignitaries, such as in the time of Ahaz, and even in the first years of Hezekiah, exercised the scourge of Isaiah (v. 7; xxviii. 14), but such as cannot have existed long under the strict and pious rule of the latter king. We may add, *thirdly*, that all reference to the calamity from Sennacherib is still wanting, and that the prophet rather takes his stand, in the first chapter, clearly before the destruction of Samaria. We must accordingly place the time of the composition between 727 and 723 B. C.

We must draw our knowledge of the character of this period from our author, whose lively rebukes and chastisement of the rampant sins and follies of the age, taken together with the corresponding features of Isaiah's picture and with statements of the historical books, give a tolerably complete portrait of the time.

The internal corruption of the nation, which under Jotham was still gilded with a superficial splendor (2 Chr. xxviii.), had under Ahaz, through the participation in criminality of this morally unripe monarch (Is. iii. 12, cf. ch. vii.), everywhere broken out. Ahaz is described as one of the most flagitious kings ever belonging to the house of David. He introduced the Baal-worship, sacrificed his children to Moloch, sanctioned by his own acts the worship of the high places, which had hitherto been barely tolerated, made arbitrary changes

in the Temple after patterns which he had seen at Damascus, and finally closed the doors of the sanctuary altogether (2 K. xvi.; 2 Chr. xxvii.). What wonder if the example from above was efficacious in poisoning the morals of the people? It was the privileged classes, in particular, who, as soon as they felt the hand over them relax, began to turn to advantage the opportunities afforded them. Covetousness and luxury were the sins most in vogue, and Isaiah v. 8 ff. gives us a melancholy evidence that nothing was holy to the wanton nobility, not the paternal field of the poor, not sacred justice itself, to prevent them from stealing the field and perverting justice, that they might bring tribute to their own lust. This condition of things Hezekiah found at his elevation to the throne, and although his will was good from the very first (2 Chr. xxix. 3), and the bulk of the people showed themselves not unfavorable to his zeal for restoring the old worship and the old piety (2 Chr. xxix. 28), it was still all the more difficult to restrain those inveterate sins of the ruling classes. The tendency of the people also was more toward an outward churchliness than toward inward religion. Isaiah and Micah zealously supported the efforts of the king to effect a reformation of those faults among the people which must have abounded especially in the first years of the reign (when our book was composed). To the bitter complaints of Isaiah, and the lively sketches which he threw out concerning the practices of the great (xxxii. 5, 6), the details drawn out in Micah ch. iii. correspond.

The *patricians* as magistrates know the right, but abuse it to fill their purses and enlarge their lands (iii. 1; ii. 1 f. 9; vi. 10 f.), and thus become rather flayers than guardians of the people (iii. 3 ff.). Strong in their combinations with each other, they have organized a formal system of public law-breaking (vii. 3; iii. 10).

The *priests*, who should cover the rights of the poor with the protection of God's law, are covetous, and judge for hire (iii. 11). With special energy of indignation, however, both prophets contended against the true source of the prevailing sin, namely, the prophetic class, whose members, according to their vocation and office, should be the organs of divine revelation, but who have degraded themselves into cheap sycophants toward the great. They stand at the head of the libertines, and speak what the ears of the latter itch for, so that it is no wonder if the rebukes of the true prophets seem to the wanton scorners of the Most High to be unintelligible drivel (ii. 6), which despising they either seek to refute with commonplaces (ii. 7), or, in the lust of revelry, deride with brutal stupidity (Is. xxviii. 8 ff.). Yet the prophets sit with them (iii. 5), feast with them, and wrest the consecrated language of the Spirit learnt in the schools of the prophets, to draw from it lulling lies of peace and of good days to come (ii. 11 ff.; iii. 5); nay, they do not shrink even from the use of heathenish arts forbidden in the law (iii. 7). Thus public life has by degrees, even in Jerusalem, reached that state on account of which Samaria was brought into one calamity after another, and finally into the last (vi. 10). The better part of the people is prepared to fulfill the ceremonial requirements of the law, and even to go beyond them (vi. 6; cf. Is. i. 11 ff.), but that this law has a moral significance, and demands holiness of heart, without which the offerings are of no value, is hidden from them, or is too bitter a truth. With severity therefore is the prophet compelled to remind them how they plunder the fugitives of the sister kingdom of Israel, as these are flying through Judah before the Assyrian army (ii. 8), and to point them to what the law requires of the inner man (vi. 18). Under these circumstances the judgments are approaching, by threatening which Micah would rouse their conscience to the final decision.

Although the title of the book names, beside the reign of Hezekiah, that also of Jotham (758–742), and of Ahaz (742–727), as the time in which Micah received his word from the Lord, and thus seems to suggest a contradiction to the date just now deduced, still there is no reason in this for doubting the trustworthiness of either of the two statements, that of the title or of the notice in Jeremiah. For if the declaration of the elders in Jeremiah is in itself credible from its antiquity, and as having been made before enemies, so is the age of the title guaranteed by the consideration that a later writer, if he had wished to furnish the book with a superscription, would certainly have considered the account in Jeremiah, and avoided the apparent contradiction by leaving out Jotham and Ahaz. In view of the fact that the book is well arranged, and that no subsequent title occurs in it, one can hardly escape the conclusion that the prophet edited, and gave the title to, his own work. And in fact it is not difficult either to harmonize the two statements. For although the discourses of our book were poured forth at one gush, so to speak, they make the impression, not of having arisen from one and the same transient situation, but of presenting the summary re-

sult, in some sense the *resumé*, of an entire life previously spent in the activity of prophetic discourse. Indeed the prophet, in the flow of his discourse, involuntarily falls into the tone of narration: "Then said I" (iii. 1). We may, accordingly, assume with the title that the various contents of the book arose before the vision of the prophet between the years 758 and 722 B. C.; but with Jeremiah that, under Hezekiah, somewhere near the close of his labors, he wrote out what was of permanent value in his several discourses, in the two chief discourses of the book before us (i.–v.; vi., vii.), and published it as a perpetual testimony (cf. Hab. ii. 2.)[1]

2. *The Person of the Prophet.*

The name Micha (מִיכָה, Gr. Μιχαιας, Lat. *Michæas*) is not of rare occurrence in the Old Testament. It is, as shown from Judg. xvii. 5 comp. w. v. 4, an abbreviation of מִיכָיָה or מִיכָיְהוּ, of which two forms the first is to be read also in Jer. xxvi. 18 in the Kethib. The signification is, accordingly: Who is like God? = מִכָאֵל. The prophet seems himself to allude to this meaning of his name (vii. 18).

Of his person we know next to nothing. That he was not, as some following Hieron. have supposed, the same with the prophet Micaiah, son of Imlah, who foretold to Ahab his approaching destruction (1 K. xxii.), is self-evident: Ahab died 897 B. C. The identity of the words which open his discourse (i. 2) with the closing words in the prophecy of that Micah (1 K. xxii. 28) is an intentional allusion. Tradition has manifold stories to tell concerning him (cf. Carpzov, *Introd.*, iii. 373 ff.). The surname מֹרַשְׁתִּי, which the title and Jer. xxvi. 18 attach to the name, is not a patronymic, as the LXX. take it (τὸν τοῦ Μωρασθεὶ), but marks the place of his origin: he himself names this, as Vitringa had remarked, Moresheth-gath (i. 14), that Moresheth which lies near the Philistine city of Gath (cf. Abel-maiim, Abel on the waters, 2 Chr. xvi. 4). This locality was still known to Eusebius in the *Onomast.* and to Hieron. who, in the *Prol. ad explanandum Michæam*, says: "*Michæam de Morasthi, qui usque hodie juxta Eleutheropolin* (five Roman miles north of Gath) *haud grandis est viculus;*" and in the *Epist.* 86 *ad Eustoch. epitaph Paulæ*, p. 677, ed. Mart., he relates that there was once the grave of Micha, but that in his time a church had been erected; and Robinson found ruins of a church and hamlet twenty minutes southeast from Beit-Jibrin, which corresponds to the Eleutheropolis of the ancients (*Bib. Res. in Pal.*, ii. 423). The derivation of the name Morashti, from the name of the town Mareshah (ch. i. 15), although common among interpreters through the influence of the Chaldee version, is inconsistent with the vocalization.

That, finally, Micah had dwelt in the region of Gath, appears to be proved in another way also by the fact that he shows himself familiar with localities there, i. 10–15 (but cf. on v. 10). It is saying too much, however, when Ewald maintains that the whole character of the book betrays the inhabitant of the low-land, and that not merely the rough and uneven language, but the exaltation of Bethlehem as compared with Jerusalem, proves the origin of the prophet.

3. *Contents and Form of the Book.*

As Micah, compared with Isaiah, embraces a shorter space of time, so his horizon is locally more restricted. The breadth of view, sweeping over all history, with which the latter surveys the greatness and recognizes the importance of his time, and sheds the light of prophecy on all sides, over all nations — over the distant islands of the Mediterranean, where, at that very time, Rome, the great city of the future, was building, and over the young Aryan peoples in the East, — indicating to them their place in the history of the world — all this is foreign to our prophet. His gaze is fixed imperturbably on his own people, but within this field he moves with the greatest intensity.[2]

1 [With this Dr. Pusey substantially agrees. After arguing plausibly that some portions of the book were spoken earlier, — ch. iv. 1 ff. as early as the reign of Jotham, — he concludes: "At the commencement, then, of Hezekiah's reign, he collected the substance of what God had taught by him, recasting it, so to speak, and retained of his spoken prophesy so much as God willed to remain for us. As it stands, it belongs to that early time of Hezekiah's reign, in which the sins of Ahaz still lived on. Corruption of manners had been hereditary. In Jotham's reign too, it is said expressly, in contrast with himself, *the people were still doing corruptly*. Idolatry had, under Ahaz, received a fanatic impulse from the king, who at last set himself to close the worship of God. The strength of Jotham's reign was gone, the longing for its restoration led to the wrong and destructive policy, against which Isaiah had to contend. Of this Micah says, such should not be the strength of the future kingdom of God. Idolatry and oppression lived on; against these, the inheritance of those former reigns, the sole residuum of Jotham's might or Ahaz' policy, the breach of the law of love of God and man, Micah concentrated his written prophecy." *Introd. to Micha*, p. 291. — Tr.]

2 ["He lingers, in his prophecy, among the towns of the maritime plain (the Shephēlah) where his birth-place lay.

If now we distribute his book, as is generally granted, into two obvious divisions: the prophetico-political, chaps. i.–v., and the ideal-contemplative, chaps. vi., vii., then in the FIRST division, discourse *first*, ch. i., we see that he finds in the judgment immediately impending over Samaria the text for his threat, that the judgment will reach even to the gates of Jerusalem (i. 9). Following immediately then, in ascending succession, the *second* discourse, chaps. ii., iii., called forth by the sin, which can no longer be restrained, and security of the people, especially of the leaders among them, now breaking out openly everywhere, — announces that Jerusalem herself shall become a stone-heap (iii. 12). Not until then can the Messiah come, amid great distress and necessity, from Bethlehem, as Micah proclaims at the culminating point of this division and of the whole book, namely, in the *third* discourse, chaps. iv., v. To this external representation of guilt, penalty, and salvation, the SECOND division, chaps. vi., vii., adds the inner one. Here, in the form of a suit-at-law between God and his people, which ends first in painful certainty of the suffering soon to be experienced, but finally in the assured confidence of salvation at last, the whole depth of Israel's mission, and his tangled ways woven out of grace and election, out of sin and forgiveness, are considered and exhibited in an evangelical light.[1]

As regards the form of the representation, Micah stands next to Isaiah in the force, pathos, freshness, and continuity of expression, and in the plastic choice of his words. In the arrangement of his thoughts, however, abrupt and fond of sharp contrasts, he reminds us more of his older contemporary, Hosea. The beautiful plan of his discourse is admirable. In the first division each of the three addresses falls into two symmetrical halves, whose subdivisions, again (cf. especially chaps. iv., v.), are for the most part regularly constructed. And in the second division also the structure of his thought is grounded on a beautiful and well defined numerical proportion.[2]

4. *Position in the Organic System of Holy Scripture.*

In the organic order of the Bible, and specially in the prophetic development of the Messianic theology, this book takes a fundamental position. Micah stands immovably within the inner sphere of the history of the Kingdom of Israel: Israel is the people chosen by God, with whom he has established a covenant from of old, and ratified it with an oath (vii. 20); in whom, from Egypt and the wilderness, he has glorified himself (vi. 4 ff.); to whom he gave a law which is altogether of a moral and spiritual character (vi. 6 ff.). This people have become alienated, not in part merely, but Judah also has followed the apostate northern kingdom (vi. 16), and a corruption of all divine institutions, offices, and orders has broken in (chaps. ii., iii.), which has thoroughly devoured everything (vii. 1 ff.). On this historical ground grow the constituent elements of his proclamation: (1). *The necessity of the judgment.* God hardens himself against their cry of distress (iii., iv.), for idolatry must be rooted out (iii. 10 ff.), the false prophets must be put to shame (iii. 6 f.). From Zion he issues the judgment (i., ii.), and unto Zion, in the centre of the kingdom, reaches the desolation by the enemy (i. 9, 12; ii., 4; iii. 12); the people are even swept away into captivity, and become

Among the few places in that neighborhood, which he selects for warning and for example of the universal captivity, is his native village, "the home he loved." But the chief scene of his ministry was Jerusalem. He names it, in the beginning of his prophecy, as the place where the idolatries, and with the idolatries, all the other sins of Judah were concentrated. The two capitals, Samaria and Jerusalem, were the chief objects of the word of God to him, because the corruption of each kingdom streamed forth from them. The sins which he rebukes are chiefly those of the capital. Extreme oppression, violence among the rich, bribing among judges, priests, prophets; building up the capital even by cost of life, or actual bloodshed; spoliation; expulsion of the powerless, women and children from their homes; covetousness; cheating in dealings; pride. These, of course, may be manifoldly repeated in lesser places of resort and of judgment. But it is *Zion and Jerusalem* which are so *built up with blood; Zion and Jerusalem* which are, on that ground, *to be ploughed as a field;* it is *the city* to which *the Lord's voice crieth;* whose *rich men are full of violence;* it is the *daughter of Zion* which is to *go forth out of the city and go to Babylon.* Especially they are the heads and princes of the people, whom he upbraids for perversion of justice and for oppression. Even the good kings of Judah seem to have been powerless to restrain the general oppression." Dr. Pusey, *Com. on Min. Prophets*, p. 289 — TR.]

1 [Dr. Pusey finds three main divisions in the book, chaps. i.–ii.; iii.–v.; vi.–vii. Further, he agrees in general with our author. "This book has a remarkable symmetry. Each of its divisions is a whole, beginning with upbraiding for sin, threatening God's judgments, and ending with promises of future mercy in Christ. The two later divisions begin again with that same characteristic *Hear ye*, with which Micah had opened the whole. The three divisions are also connected, as well by lesser references of the later to the former, as also by the advance of the prophecy." . . . . "There is also a sort of progress in the promises of the three parts. In the first, it is of deliverance generally, in language taken from that first deliverance from Egypt. The second is objective, the birth of the Redeemer, the conversion of the Gentiles, the restoration of the Jews, the nature and extent of his kingdom. The third is mainly subjective, man's repentance, waiting upon God, and God's forgiveness of his sins. *Minor Prophets*, p. 291. — TR.]

2 [Dr. Pusey's characterization of Micah's style is faithful and interesting. He has very elaborately investigated the varieties and adaptations of his poetic rhythm, and compared them with other of the Minor Prophets, p. 292. — TR.]

a prey to the world-power, which is here designated by a name, typical from the earliest times, the name of Babylon (Babel), iv. 10. But (2), *the certainty of salvation* is not thereby abrogated; it will come notwithstanding, and that through the Messiah, whose person, office, and name are described more directly and plainly than we often find them (v. 1 ff.). Thus becomes established in Zion (3) *the glorious kingdom of the future* (iv. 1 f. 8), a kingdom of peace and blessing (iv. 3 f.; v. 4, 9; vii. 14 ff.), founded in God's pity and readiness to forgive sin (vii. 18 f.), on the ruins of the world-power (v. 5 f.). Its members are the "dispersed of Israel," the wretched, "the remnant" (iv. 6 f.; v. 2, 6 ff.). But the heathen nations also, overcome by God's glory and might (vii. 16; iv. 3), will seek, instead of their oracles, the living God (iv. 2), for the separating barrier of the statute is far removed (vii. 11).

Luther: The prophet Micah lived in the days of Isaiah, whose words he also quotes, as in the second chapter. Thus one may discern how the prophets who lived at the same time preached almost the same words concerning Christ, as if they had taken counsel with each other thereof. He is, however, one of the excellent prophets, who vehemently chastise the people for their idolatry, and brings forward always the future Christ and his kingdom. And he is for all a peculiar prophet in this, that he so plainly points out and names Bethlehem as the city where Christ should be born. Hence he was also in the O. T. highly celebrated, as Matt. ii. 6 well shows. In brief, he rebukes, prophesies, preaches, etc. But in the end this is his meaning, that although everything must go to ruin, Israel and Judah, still the Christ will come who will restore all, etc.

[Dr. Pusey: The light and shadows of the prophetic life fell deeply on the soul of Micah. The captivity of Judah, too, had been foretold before him. Moses had foretold the end from the beginning, had set before them the captivity and the dispersion, as a punishment which the sins of the people would certainly bring upon them. Hosea presupposed it; Amos foretold that Jerusalem, like the cities of its heathen enemies, should be burned with fire. Micah had to declare its lasting desolation. Even when God wrought repentance through him, he knew that it was but for a time; for he foresaw and foretold that the deliverance would be, not in Jerusalem, but at Babylon, in captivity. His prophecy sank so deep that, above a century afterwards, just when it was about to have its fulfillment, it was *the* prophecy which was remembered. But the sufferings of time disappeared in the light of eternal truth. Above seven centuries rolled by, and Micah reappears as the herald, not now of sorrow, but of salvation. Wise men from afar, in the nobility of their simple belief, asked, *Where is he that is born king of the Jews?* A king, jealous for his temporal empire, gathered all those learned in Holy Scripture, and echoed the question. The answer was given, unhesitatingly, as a well-known truth of God, in the words of Micah, *For that it is written in the prophet.* Glorious peerage of the two contemporary prophets of Judah! Ere Jesus was born, the Angel announced the birth of the Virgin's Son, *God with us*, in the words of Isaiah. When He was born, he was pointed out as the Object of worship to the first converts from the heathen, on the authority of God, through Micah. — Tr.]

Literature, vid. Gen. Introduction.

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MICAH.

FIRST DIVISION.

FIRST DISCOURSE.

CHAPTER I.

1 Word of Jehovah, which came to Micah the Morasthite, in the days of Jotham,
Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 Hear, all ye peoples,
Attend, O earth,[1] and all that is therein!
And let the Lord, Jehovah, be a witness against you,
The Lord from his holy temple.
3 For, behold, Jehovah cometh forth out of his place,
And cometh down, and treadeth on the high places of the earth.
4 And the mountains melt under him,
And the valleys cleave asunder,
As wax before the fire,
As waters poured down a descent.
5 For the transgression of Jacob is all this,
And for the sins of the house of Israel.
Who is the transgression[2] of Jacob?
Is it not Samaria?
And who are the high places of Judah?
Are they not Jerusalem?

6 And I[3] will make Samaria a heap in the field,
Plantations of vines;
And will pour down into the ravine the stones thereof,
And lay bare her foundations.
7 And all her carved images shall be broken in pieces,
And all her hires be burned with fire;
And all her idols will I make a desolation:
For from the hire of a harlot has she gathered,
And to the hire of a harlot shall they return.
8 For this let me wail and howl,
Let me go stripped and naked;
I will make a wailing like the jackals,
And a mourning like the ostriches.
9 For deadly are her wounds;
For it has come unto Judah:
He has reached unto the gate of my people, unto Jerusalem.
10 In Gath [Annunciation[5]] announce it not;
In Acco[6] [vale of tears] weep not;
In Bethleaphra [Dusthouse] I wallow in the dust,
11 Pass on with you, inhabitant of Shaphir [Fairview],
In shameful nakedness.
The inhabitant of Zaanan [Outlet] goeth not out;
The wailing of Beth-ezel[7] [house of separation]
Taketh from you its standing-place.

12 For the inhabitant of Maroth [Bitterness] is anxious about good,
For evil has come down from Jehovah,
To the gate of Jerusalem.
13 Bind the chariot to the courser, inhabitant of Lachish;
The beginning of sin was she to the house of Zion;
For in thee were found the transgressions of Israel.
14 Therefore must thou give a release [8]
For Moresheth-gath [Gath's possession];
The houses of Achzib [Place of deceit] [9] shall be a deception
To the kings of Israel.
15 Yet will I bring an heir to thee
Inhabitant of Mareshah [Possession]; [10]
To Adullam will come the glory of Israel.[11]
16 Make thee bald and shave thy head,
For the sons of thy delight;
Enlarge thy baldness as the eagle;
For they are carried away from thee.

GRAMMATICAL AND TEXTUAL.

[1 Ver. 2.—Although Dr. Kleinert, in the confessedly difficult question, Who are comprehended within the scope of this address? leans to the opinion that עַמִּים means "peoples," and not "tribes of Israel," still he would have אֶרֶץ denote simply the "land" of Israel. We prefer the judgment of Maurer and others (falling in with the Eng. vers.) which regards the people of the "earth" as summoned to the great controversy. This leaves, indeed, some difficulty, if the next clause be understood to refer strictly to the sacred nation, but not serious. Nothing, however, but the apparent unanimity of commentators in such reference, would prevent the present writer from suggesting that the בְּ in בָּכֶם should be regarded rather in its more usual signification, "in," "among." Then the conception would be that God makes this great display of judgment in the midst of the nations, at the central point, in Palestine. All would thus be preliminary to the announcement of its occasion and object, until the fifth verse, which points directly to Israel and Judah. — Tr.]

[2 Ver. 5.—"פֶּשַׁע et בָּמוֹת, *meton. pro eorundem causa et auctore.*" Maurer. — Tr.]

[3 Ver. 6.—וְשַׂמְתִּי. Dr. Pusey, speaking (p. 292) of the simplicity of Micah's style, as exemplified in the frequent use of the conjunction *and*, in place of more explanatory conjunctions, says very truly what admits of wider application than he gives it: "An English reader loses some of the force of this simplicity by the paraphrase, which, for the simple copula, substitutes the inference or contrast, *therefore*, *then*, *but*, *notwithstanding*, which lie in the subjects themselves. The English reader might have been puzzled, at first sight, by the monotonous simplicity of the *and*, *and*, joining together the mention of events, which stand either as the contrast or the consequence of those which precede them. The English version accordingly has consulted for the reader or hearer, by drawing out for him the contrast or consequence which lay beneath the surface. But this gain of clearness involved giving up so far the majestic simplicity of the Prophet, who at times speaks of things as they lay in the Divine Mind, and as, one by one, they would be unfolded to man, without explaining the relation in which they stood to one another." It might well be added that it is often difficult to make this relation more plain than the prophet has expressed it, with full certainty of not having made it something different. — Tr.]

[4 Ver. 9. — Kleinert understands God to be the subject here (with Eng. Vers.), which is not unlike the prophet's sudden changes of person, but the masc. form of the verb may possibly be accounted for by the general want of concord (sing. adj. for plur., and sing. verb for plural) in the preceding clauses, cf. Maur. and Hitz. — Tr.]

[5 Ver. 10.—Kleinert, in his version of vers. 10-15, has followed the plan of adding to the names of places mentioned, other names (real or imaginary), denoting more plainly the sense which he supposes the prophet to have attached to them in his play upon the words. A different etymology is thus assumed in several instances, for the geographical names, from that ascribed to them by the best authorities. Gath, *e. g.*, which Gesen. derives from נָגַן, and Fürst from גָּנַת, Kleinert treats here as if from נָגַד. Similarly with Zaanan, and Beth-ezel. — Tr.]

[6 Ver. 10. — Dr. Pusey (with Rosenm., Hieron., Eng. Vers.): "*Weep not at all*" (*lit.*, weeping, weep not). Weeping is the stillest expression of grief. We speak of "weeping in silence." Yet this also was too visible a token of grief. Their weeping would be the joy and laughter of God's enemies." In a foot-note he severely, almost scornfully, rejects the interpretation of our author (and most modern commentators), and brings strong reasons in support of his censure. (Kleinert's reasons may be seen in the Exeget. note.) He seems to me not to have allowed enough for the requirements of the parallelism *in this connection*, and to have maintained a sense of the clause which is strikingly incompatible with the conspicuous mourning of the next member. — Tr.]

[7 Ver. 11. — *Locus vexatissimus!* The exceeding conciseness of the expression renders it simply impossible, at this day, to say with full confidence whether c should be connected with the preceding, as the *terminus ad quem*, or with the following as its subject. Dr. Kleinert adopts the former view, and translates, —

The population of Zaanan (*Auszug*) will not go out
To the mourning to Bethhaesel (House of removal),
For he takes away from you his place.

He thus approximates to the view of the Eng. Vers. But Hitzig, Umbreit, and Keil, quoted in the Exeget. notes, all regard "the mourning," etc., as the subject of the following verb. With this agree Maurer and Pusey: —

The mourning of Beth-ezel
Will take (or takes) from you its standing;

each with some varieties of interpretation. Translating as we have done, literally, the meaning is likely to be: "The

distressed inhabitants of Zaanan cannot leave their walls, because the supposed neighboring town of Beth-ezel can give no standing in it, being in like affliction from besieging foes." Zunz gives a peculiar rendering: "(Yet) has not the inhabitant of Zaanan gone forth, (and) the funeral procession of Beth Haezel (already) takes its station by you." — Tr.]

[8 Ver. 14. — שִׁלּוּחִים, *lit.* "dismissions," and applicable to the act or form of giving up possession of anything. Some prefer to take it here in the sense of "dowry" or "bridal presents," with which the father sent his daughter away (released her to her husband) in marriage (1 K. ix. 16). The effect is the same. — Tr.]

[9 Ver. 14. — Kleinert, following Hitzig, translates אַכְזָב, "deceitful brook," relying apparently on Jer. xv. 18; but there the addition of מַיִם לֹא נֶאֱמָנוּ alone warrants that metaphor in אַכְזָב. — Tr.]

[10 Ver. 15. — So Fürst; Gesen.: "hill city." — Tr.]

[11 Ver. 15. — The choice which the English version gives between this and: "He will come to Adullam the glory of Israel," still remains open, each rendering being supported by many high authorities. — Tr.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The Judgment upon Samaria and the land of Judah. Concerning the inscription and the date of the writing, see the Introduction.[1] The event foretold is, evidently, in the immediate historical sense, besides the capture of Samaria (ver. 6), the expedition which, after this conquest, the Assyrian king (Salmanasar, [Shalmanezer,] or Sargon) sent out, under his general Tartan, against Philistia and Egypt (Is. xx.), and which sorely wasted Judah (ver. 9 ff.). The same fact formed the subject also of the prophecy of Isaiah x. 5 ff., with which ours has otherwise much similarity (cf. also on ver. 10).

The discourse, in a rapid but beautiful flow, runs through a great circle of thought. Its structure is outwardly characterized by several leading themes which are expressed in brief sentences of lively rhythm, and about which as fixed centres the discourse revolves (5 b, 9 b, 12 b). It thus falls, in respect to its *contents*, into two main portions, each of which has an exordium and two subdivisions:

1. The *threatening* of the destruction of Ephraim, vers. 2–7.
(*a*) Exordium, ver. 2.
(*b*) General threatening, vers. 3–5.
(*c*) Special threatening, vers. 6, 7.

2. The *lamentation* over the chastisement of the land of Judah, vers. 8–16.
(*a*) Exordium and new theme, vers. 8, 9.
(*b*) Song of lament, vers. 10–12.
(*c*) Particular description, vers. 13–16.

In *form*, we clearly distinguish the two parts, symmetrical in the number (25) of their members, vers. 2–7, and 10–16, from the lyrical part thrown in between, vers. 8, 9.

1. The *threatening*, vers. 2–7. The exordium, ver. 2, attaches itself directly through the exclamation: **Hear ye peoples all,**[2] to the discourse of Micah's namesake in the Book of Kings (1 K. xxii. 28), with whom our author had the common fate of being compelled to encounter false prophets (compare ii. 11, with 1 K. xxii. 23). In other respects also our Micah coincides frequently with the Book of Kings. Compare the allusion, vi. 16, the phrase in iv. 4, with 1 K. v. 5; iv. 13, 14, with 1 K. xxii. 11, 24; the mode of writing אַבָּי (instead of אָבִיא), i. 15, with 1 K. xxi. 29; so that even Hitzig cannot shut out the perception that the historical sources of that book must have lain before him to read. Whether the address עַמִּים denotes merely the tribes of Israel, or all nations, is hard to decide. For the former view speaks not only the further tenor of the discourse, which is directed to Israel alone, but also the parallel Deut. xxxii. 8. For, towards the same song of Moses, the subsequent sentences of this exordium point back (as indeed that song sounds on through the whole course of prophecy): **Attend, O land and its fulness.** Cf. Jer. xxii. 29; viii. 16. Micah expressly addresses the land alone, and omits the addition commonly made to the other repetitions of this phrase, "and O ye heavens," which would give to אֶרֶץ the signification "earth:" there is the same limitation to Israel as in *ammim*. The land is appealed to, as in the first of the passages cited from Jeremiah,[3] not, as in Is. i. 2, as witness of a judgment, or, as in Ps. l. 4, a messenger; but Jehovah's complaint is begun in the very address; give attention, **and let the Lord Jehovah become a witness against you;** בְּ in a hostile sense, as 1 Sam. xii. 5; Mal. iii. 5; **the Lord from his holy temple;** whence all his holy and powerful announcements go forth over the land (Am. i. 2). The temple is emphatically a temple of the holiness of Jehovah, because by the messages and deeds of judgment which proceed from it does He show himself as the Holy One (Is. v. 16).

Vers. 3–5. **The Testimony itself.** Jehovah will in person, and that soon (part. c. הִנֵּה), appear in a theophany (Ps. xviii. 50) for judgment. **For behold Jehovah comes forth out of His place.** From the temple proceeds the discourse of God, his appearance from heaven, for there He has his habitation (Ps. ii. 4); **and comes down and treads on the heights of the earth,** *i. e.*, the mountains (ver. 4), which are nearest to heaven, and the highest of which, Sinai, saw the first theophany of God concerning his people (Deut. xxxiii. 2; Hab. iii. 3). The word בָּמֳתֵי is, according to the constant reading of the Keri, regarded and pointed as plural of an obsolete form בֹּמֶת, while the Kethib everywhere reads בָּמֹתֵי, or בָּמוֹתֵי, a double plural of בָּמָה (Ges. § 87, 5, Rem. 1).

Ver. 4. **And the mountains melt under him,**

1 ["No two of the prophets authenticate their prophecy in exactly the same way. They, one and all, have the same simple statement to make — that this which they say is *from* God and *through* them. A later hand, had it added the titles, would have formed all on the same model. The title was an essential part of the prophetic book, as indicating to the people afterwards, that it was not written after the event. It was a witness, not to the prophet whose name it bears, but to God." Pusey. — Tr.]

2 ["כֻּלָּם, *negligentius, pro* כֻּלְּכֶם." Maurer. — Tr.].

3 [But in this passage the context plainly restricts the application of the term to the country of Israel. The phrase, "Hear, O Earth," had become stereotyped as a solemn invocation of the world itself to appear as a witness or a party in God's contest with mankind. Vid. Textual and Gram. on this verse. — Tr.].

and the valleys cleave asunder as the wax before the fire, as water poured down a descent. The description rests as in other places, on the analogy of a tempest, when the mountains are veiled in clouds, and the earth, dissolved into flowing mud, pours down so that deep gullies are torn through the plains (Judg. v. 5). Mountain and valley, height and depth are, furthermore, a more comprehensive expression for the shaking of the whole land. The two comparisons, *c*, *d*, have the down rushing torrent of water for their object; the first is proper and one often employed (Ps. lxviii. 3), the second comes back to the reality; the כְּ is often (pleonastically) used in such comparisons also (Is. i. 7; xiv. 19). As salvation comes amid the peacefulness of surrounding nature (Is. xi.), so the judgment with prodigious disturbances of the natural course of things (Matt. xxiv. 7, 29); for it is the consequence of sin, which has broken up the harmony of the world.

Ver. 5 connects this representation with its ground in the present state of things, **For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel.** "ב *pretii*, compare *e.g.*, 1 Sam. iii. 27 with 30." Hitzig. "House" is, as often, collective for "sons." But the discourse does not pause with even this statement; it proceeds to a more exact indication in the decisive sentence 5 b: **Who is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria?** In Samaria sin has reached such a climax that it has become the substance of the popular life, and from the capital outward has poisoned and polluted all the land (Hos. vi. 10). And already from this point forward the light is thrown in a striking parallel on the sin and fate of Judah, to which principally he will later turn: **and who are the heights of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?** Jerusalem is a prominent city; the hills on which it lies should be sanctuaries of God (Ps. xcix. 9), but as it now stands, the eternal heights have, through idolatry, become Bamoth (Ez. xxxvi. 2) *sensu odioso*, *i. e.*, high places for idols (1 K. xv. 14).

It is accordingly not doubtful on whom the judgment of God must take effect. First Samaria: vers. 6, 7. **Therefore will I make Samaria a heap in the field, plantations of vines**: *i. e.*, not merely lay it in ruins (Hos. xii. 12), but make it waste for so long a time that husbandmen shall devote the depopulated region to tillage, and convert the fertile territory (Is. xxviii. 1) into a vineyard; **and pour down the stones of it into the valley**, down from the hill on which it lay (Am. vi. 1) (Robinson, *Bib. Res. in Pal.*, iii. 138 ff., 1st ed.; cf. Joseph., *Ant.*, xiii. 10, § 3), **and lay bare its foundations**, *i. e.*, destroy it to the very ground (Ps. cxxxvii. 7). "The whole mountain on which the ancient city lay is now cultivated to the summit, but in the middle of it, on the field, a heap of ruins is to be seen, and not far off lies a miserable village, Jabustiah." Quandt.

Ver. 7. **And all her carved images** (פסל, Ex. xxxiv. 1) **shall be broken in pieces; and all her hires be burned with fire.** Hires (of harlotry) are primarily the consecrated offerings lavished on the idol altars, by which the preparations for the service were maintained (Ros., Casp., Keil); for, since God is the rightful husband of Israel (Hos. ii. 18 ff.), idolatry is whoredom (Hos. ix. 1). But they are also all the possessions of the city, because she looks upon her riches not as the gift of God, but of the idols, her paramour (Hos. ii. 7, 15), (Hitzig). **And all her idols will I make a desolation. For from the hire of a harlot has she gathered, and to the hire of a harlot shall they return**: become a prey to other idolaters, who will devote these things again to their idols, שׁוּב, as in Gen. iii. 19.

2. *The lamentation*, vers. 8–16. Already in ver. 8, the prophet turns and prepares the transition vers. 8, 9, to the new discourse, which according to 5 b is directed against Judah. For, that the complaint has reference specially to Judah appears from the connection and contents of what follows. It belongs to the theanthropic element in the nature of prophecy, that the prophets, on the one hand, standing above the people, utter with seeming mercilessness the decrees of God's justice, while on the other, as members of the people, they enter sympathizingly into the deepest popular suffering. **Therefore let me lament and wail, let me go stripped and naked.** אילכה has the incorrect scriptio plena, like Ps. xix. 14; Ex. xxxv. 31; שׁילל, from the stem שׁלל, after the formation הֵידָד (Is. xvi. 9), signifies robbed, *spoliatus*; the Masoretes have without reason substituted another form שׁוֹלָל, after Job xii. 17. Wherein the robbery consists is shown by the addition: naked, *i. e.* without the over garment (1 Sam. xix. 24). The prophet's complaint also is symbolical prophecy; when he represents his nakedness as robbery it becomes the emblem of the fate of his people (cf. Is. xx. 3 ff.).

I will make a complaint like the jackals, and a mourning like the ostriches. In Job xxx. 29, also these animals appear as types of the cries of pain.

Ver. 9. **For deadly are her wounds** [*lit.*, "the strokes" inflicted upon her]. The plural מַכּוֹת is construed with the fem. sing. of the predicate according to Ew. 317 a [Ges. § 147 b]. There is implied in the subject the thought that the sad fate comes from God, is from above; in the pred., the common comparison of public calamities to diseases. (Is. i. 5 ff.) The suffix to מכות takes the place of a *genit. obj.*; it refers to Samaria. The prophet mourns so bitterly over the afflictions appointed to Samaria, because they are deadly; and deadly for all Israel; **for they come even to Judah; HE** (Jehovah, cf. Job iii. 20) **reaches even to the gate of my people, to Jerusalem.** Therefore are the wounds deadly, because they strike the heart of the land and the seat of the sanctuary; and yet according to ver. 5 b, it cannot be otherwise. The gate is, in eastern countries, the place of solemn assembly; hence Jerusalem is called the gate of God's people, because there Israel held his solemn courts (Is. xxxiii. 20). Notice the affecting increase of intensity in the discourse, which reaches its climax, in the last clause of verse ninth. With this the theme is given also of the new turn to the thought, and now begins, —

Ver. 10, the proper *lamentation itself*. **Following a view common in the O. T.** (Ps. xxv. 3; Lam. ii. 17), he thinks first of the malicious joy of their heathen neighbors. **In Gath announce it not**, the Philistine city on the northwest border of Judah. With this expression the prophet recalls an earlier occurrence, David's lamentation

over the death of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. i. 20). The paronomasia which he finds in the words of the song — for גּת may be regarded, like לת 1 Sam. iv. 19, as an infinitive from נגד— gives him occasion to repeat this figure to the end of the chapter, in ever new applications. (Compare the translation, where the paronomasia is indicated mostly after the manner of Rückert).[1] The very next member shows another instance of this play on words. The present text seems indeed to be capable of meaning only: Weep not. But in the apparent inf. abs. בָּכוֹ, there lurks (as Reland, *Pal. Illustr.*, 534 ff., first perceived) a contraction בְּעַכּוֹ: **in Acco weep not.** Acco is the later Ἄκη or Πτολεμαΐς, a city of the Canaanites lying northward on the coast (Judg. i. 31). That such contraction in fact exists is proved by a comparison of the LXX. who, according to the common reading of the Vatican, translate οἱ Ἐνακεὶμ, with the statement in Euseb. (*Onomast.*, ed. Larsow, p. 188), that in Micah, a city named Ἐνακεὶμ is mentioned. This can refer only to the passage before us, and the statement in Eusebius rests evidently on the LXX. But the word Ἐνακεὶμ which they offer is nothing. The Enakites, of whom alone they could be thinking, did not, according to Josh. xi. 21, dwell so far up as Acco, and are besides always called Ἐνακὶμ or υἱοὶ Ἐνὰκ by the LXX. Hence the Alexandrian reading οἱ ἐν Ἀχεὶμ is evidently preferable. (Some MSS. and the Aldina read ἐν Βαχεὶμ, not understanding the contraction, and regarding the בְּ as belonging to the name). In Ἀχεὶμ, Ἀκεὶμ, then, we have the name of a city, especially if with Hitzig we assume that it was originally ἐν Ἄκει, and that the μ has been drawn back by mistake from the following μη.— For our explanation speaks first, the fact that thus the parallelism is completely established, and the grammatical impossibility of connecting an inf. abs. with אל instead of לא is avoided. And secondly, that the contraction is possible is proved by the analogous examples כְּשָׁקָה for כשקעה, Am. viii. 8; בִּי for בְּעִי: בָּלָה for בעלה, Josh. xix. 3; xv. 29, and the altogether analogous לָמוֹ Ps. xxviii. 8, for לְעַמּוֹ, the replacement of the sharpened syllable by the lengthening of the vowel being a familiar fact. Finally, that it was necessary, when a paronomasia obvious to the ear was aimed at, is obvious.

After the malignant triumph of their enemies, the prophet sees next the sorrow of his fellow-countrymen. A series of devastated places meets the eye of the seer, and their names become to him the texts of his lamentation and gloomy previsions. Whether the designation of the places is connected, as in Is. x., with the route of the hostile army is, owing to their generally more or less questionable position, and to the absence of any such express intimation as we have in Isaiah, very doubtful. So much at least is clear, however, that the territory in which the places named are contained reaches but a little beyond Jerusalem on the east, while westwardly it stretches to the border of the Philistines at Gath; that, accordingly, just such cities are named as must naturally be most harmed by an army streaming over Judah upon Philistia. The preterites are prophetic.[2] **For Bethleaphra,** on account of the misfortune of the Benjamite city Ophra, (Jos. xviii. 23), not far from Jerusalem, **I scatter dust on myself** [better, " roll myself in the dust "], in token of deep affliction; cf. Jer. vi. 26, in accordance with which passage the useless correction of the margin is here made. *Verba sentiendi* are construed with בּ (Ew. § 217 f. 2 B.) [Ges. s. v. B. 5 c.]; בּית is an addition to names of places which may also be omitted (cf. ver. 11 below, and Ges., *Thes.*, 193).

Ver. 11. **Set out on thy journey inhabitant of Shafir** (pleasantness) **in shameful nakedness.** The dat. eth. לכם is in the plural because ישׁבת here, and in all the following verses is understood collectively; עבר stands here, as in Ex. xxxii. 27, in antithesis to שׁוּב: depart, go away. Shaphir lay, according to the *Onom.*, near Eleutheropolis, and is perhaps identical with the Shamir, Josh. xv. 48, which was on the southwest of the mountain of Judah, עריה בשׁת, nakedness-shame = shameful nakedness, is a compound idea, like Ps. xlv. 5, humility-righteousness, and stands in acc. adv. (cf. Prov. xxxi. 9.

The meaning of what follows becomes plain when once we take מִסְפַּד as an acc. of direction, as it often stands with יצא (Gen. xxvii.

1 [Cowles on this passage, well says: " The remaining part of this chapter, is a graphic painting of the first results of the Assyrian invasion, as they were felt in one city after another along the line of his march. In most of the cases, the things said of each city are a play on the significant name of that city — a method of writing well adapted to impress the idea upon the memory. Sometimes there is merely a resemblance in sound between the prominent word spoken of a city and the name of that city. Both of these cases fall under that figure of speech, technically called a *paronomasia*. The latter form of it — resemblance in sounds — is of course untranslatable. The other form — a play upon the *significance* of the name of a city — is as if one should exclaim: What! is there quarrelling in Concord? war in Salem [Peace]; family feuds in Philadelphia [Brotherly Love]; slavery in Freetown?"

Dr. Pusey (*Intr. to Min. Proph.*, p. 293): " His description of the destruction of the cities or villages of Judah corresponds in vividness to Isaiah's ideal march of Sennacherib. The flame of war spreads from place to place, but Micah relieves the sameness of the description of misery by every variety which language allows. He speaks of them in his own person, or to them; he describes the calamity in past or in future, or by the use of the imperative. The verbal allusions are crowded together in a way unexampled elsewhere. Moderns have spoken of them as not after their taste, or have apologized for them. The mighty prophet who wrought a repentance greater than his great contemporary Isaiah, knew well what would impress the people to whom he spoke. The Hebrew names had definite meanings. We can well imagine how, as name after name passed from the prophet's mouth, connected with some note of woe, all around awaited anxiously, to know upon what place the fire of the prophet's word would next fall, and as at last it had fallen upon little and mighty round about Jerusalem, the names of the places would ring in their ears as heralds of the coming woe; they would be like so many monuments, inscribed beforehand with the titles of departed greatness, reminding Jerusalem itself of its portion of the prophecy, that *evil* should come *from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem*." — Tr.]

2 [The abrupt change, indicative of intensity of excitement, from the imperf. in ver. 8, to the pret. in vers. 9, 10, 11, 12, and to the imperat. in 11, 13, 16, is worthy of attention. — Tr.]

3; 1 Chr. v. 18). **Not the inhabitant of Zaanan** (departure) **shall go forth for mourning at Bethhaezel** [Kleinert, *Nimmhausen*; Ges., *Fixed house*]. Zaanan is perhaps the Zenan mentioned in Josh. xv. 37, in the western lowland, and Bethhaezel (cf. on ver. 10) the Azel named by Zech. (xiv. 5), which lay at the foot of Mount Olivet, and had gained, according to that passage, a mournful celebrity in the days of Uzziah, not long before Micah's time, from the fact that the people took refuge there in a great earthquake. There seems to have been an annual mourning held at that place, as was usual in commemorating such national calamities (Zech. xii. 11). This, according to our verse, can no more be the case with the cities of Judah, for which Zaanan, on account of the paronomasia, is made a representative, for he, who executes the judgment, as ver. 9, **takes away from you his** (Ezel's) **stations.** It is carried away according to God's appointment, by the enemies' hand. Herein also lies a paronomasia, because אצל as well as לקח means: to take away. Hitzig translates: Zaanan goes not forth because the lamentation of the neighborhood takes away from you its standing-place. Umbreit: The grief of Bethhaezel turns away its places for you. Keil: The cry of Bethhaezel takes away from you the standing with it. [Maurer: "*Planctus Bethaezel*, i. e., quod oppressi ab hostibus tenentur Bethhaezelenses, id *aufert vobis hospitium ejus, facit ut nullum ibi refugium habeatis*."] 1

Ver. 12. **For** — as leading sentence must be supplied all along, from ver. 8, "I cannot" — **the inhabitant of Maroth** [bitterness] **writhes in pain, because of the** [lost] **prosperity.** Maroth, a village, as the mention of it in connection with Ezel shows, lying near Jerusalem; otherwise of no significance. לְ before the object of emotion (Ew. 217 d. 2 c.). **For,** so the discourse turns, with a resumption of the main theme from verse 9, to its last division, **evil comes down from Jehovah unto the gate of Jerusalem.**

In place of the sympathizing lamentation we have again, as at the beginning, the prophetic threat, first in the indirect, imperative form, so that actions are enjoined upon the object of the threatening, which must come as immediate effects of the threatened judgment (Is. ii. 10); ver. 13. **Harness the chariot to the courser, inhabitant of Lachish,** to escape, namely, from the punishment. The play upon words here lies in the homophony of the roots רכש and לכשׁ. Lachish, a fortified city, not far from Eleutheropolis, still remaining as a ruin under the name of Um Lakis: **The beginning of the sin was it for the daughter of Jerusalem,** for the population of Jerusalem, **that in thee were found the transgressions of Israel,** i. e., the idolatry of the ten tribes, which had, accordingly, first found admission at Lachish, and from thence had inundated Judah (vi. 16).

Ver. 14. **Therefore wilt thou give the release upon Moresheth Gath.** Lachish is no longer addressed, as the connection shows, but Israel, which throughout, even in ver. 6, is the object; and לכן is, as frequently, a free connective. At the marriages of princes a dowry was given, and this is expressed by נָתַן שִׁלּוּחִים (1 K. ix. 16); this Israel gives to the enemy in the form of Moresheth — although certainly not freely renounced. But there lies at the same time in the idea of שִׁלּוּחִים, the side thought that one divorces himself from the abandoned property, Jer. iii. 8 (Hitzig). Hence also the play on the words: the homophonous מְאֹרָשָׂה signifies the betrothed (Deut. xxxii. 23). On Moresheth-Gath, *i. e.*, Moresheth near Gath, the home of the prophet, which likewise lay in the southwest portion of Judah, cf. the Introd. 2.

The houses of Achzib [deception] **will become a deceitful brook to the king of Israel.** אַכְזָבִים, are brooks which dry up in the summer, and deceive the thirsty wayfarer who knowing their site, goes in search of them (Jer. xv. 18; Job vi. 15 ff.; Ps. cxxvi. 4). Like them will Achzib slip from the hands of the kings of Israel, *i. e.*, those of Judah, for after the destruction of Samaria, the kingdom of the ten tribes has ceased. The city lay, like the others, in the lowland of Judæa (Josh. xv. 44); now the ruins Kussabeh.

Ver. 15. **I will moreover bring** (אָבִי instead of אביא, as in 1 K. xxi. 29,) **the conqueror upon thee, inhabitant of Mareshah** (conquered town). Maresha near Achzib (Jos. xv. 44) is the present Marasch (Tobler, *Dritte Wanderung*, p. 139, 142 f.); **even to Adullam** (Josh. xii. 15; xv. 35) northward from Maresha, but not discovered as yet, **shall the nobility** (Is. v. 13) **of Israel come,** namely, to hide themselves in the mountain caves there, in which David once sought refuge from Saul (1 Sam. xxii. 1).

The prophet has named twelve cities of Judah, six in the lamentation, and six in the threatening, and, still further intensifying his lament, closes the whole, ver. 16, with an address to the mourning mother, Israel, who must see her children dragged away into exile (Jer. xxxi. 15; Is. iii. 26). **Make thee bald and shear thy head** — in spite of the prohibition, Deut. xiv. 1, this had remained a common sign of sorrowful lamentation for the dead (Jer. xvi. 6; cf. Job i. 20; Is. xv. 2) — **for the sons of thy delight; enlarge thy baldness like the eagle** (the griffin vulture is meant, which is often met with in Egypt and Syria, and has the whole forepart of the head bare of feathers); **for they are carried away from thee, led away captives.**

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

Very differently goes the course of the two sister kingdoms (cf. Ezek. ch. xxiii.), and yet goes with both to the same destruction. The sacred heights, on which the Lord will set his foot when He comes down to his people, have become in Judah also heights of corruption. What has she now of advantage over her apostate sister, Samaria, whom yet the Lord had let go her own way (cf. Rom. iii.)? She has, indeed, much still; she has the holy temple, the fountain of God's holy ordinances, and with that the certainty that God cannot allow her to be utterly destroyed, although he has overthrown Samaria to the very foundation. But through judgment must Judah pass like Samaria; the holy ordinances profit not the sinful generation to whom they have become a dead and despised possession (cf. 2 Macc. v.19 f.). Nay, such a possession insures to the people among whom it exists, a serious trial, for

1 [Cf. the Textual and Gram. note on this passage. — Tr.]

God's holiness, proceeding from the "Temple of his holiness," is a beaming light which becomes a consuming fire when it finds no longer life but death round about it (Is. x. 17). All the names of auspicious presage become then omens of judgment. For, as sin is the distortion of that which should be between man and God, the judgment is the turning straight again of that which has been turned awry (Ps. xviii. 27 b) Israel, the mother who parted from God (Hos. ii. 8), has neglected her children; therefore will she have no friends in these children, but in her widowhood be also childless. Where the churches become empty the church herself is to blame for it.

HENGSTENBERG: The discourse, beginning with the general judgment of the world, turns suddenly to the judgment upon Israel. This is to be explained only from the relation in which the two judgments stand to each other, they being in essence completely the same, and different only in space, time, and unessential circumstances; so that one can say, that in every partial judgment upon Israel there is the world-judgment. Here, as always in the threatenings of the prophets, we must take care that we do not, in a particular historical event, lose sight of the animating idea. Let this be rightly apprehended, and it will appear that a particular, historical occurrence may indeed be specially intended, but never can exhaust the prediction; that in this passage also we ought not, on account of the primary reference to the Chaldæan (?) catastrophe, at all to exclude that in which, before or afterward, the same law was realized.

RIEGER: From the (threatening) nature of the time we may most easily perceive the purport and aim of such prophecies, namely, to rebuke the then prevailing sins, to announce the judgment of God on account of them, but ever also to bring forward the promises of Christ, and thus to call to repentance; most especially to support believers, that they may find effectual comfort in the general disorder, and abide in patient waiting for the kingdom of God and Christ. Nay, when many were first awakened from their sleep under the punishment of their sins, they would be turned by words of this kind to their covenant God, and not despair of his promise.

On the Fulfillment. KEIL: Micah prophesies in this chapter, for the most part, not particular definite punishments, but the judgment in general, without precise indications as to its accomplishment, so that his prediction embraces all the judgments against Judah which took place from the Assyrian invasion on until the Roman catastrophe.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

The judgment must begin at the house of God.

1. It must begin, for God, the injured One, is Judge of the world; vers. 2–4.

2. It must begin at the house of God, *i. e.*, at the congregation of his people. For —

(*a*) He has here his seat and place; ver. 2.

(*b*) Upon this his eye first falls when He comes to judge the whole earth; ver. 3.

(*c*) Here is the right knowledge of God, to have fallen away from which to idolatry is a peculiar guilt; vers. 5 b, 7.

3. In the congregation, moreover, it strikes all; vers. 8–16.

(*a*) Not the godless only but the pious also, who see it come and must share in the sorrow and lamentation; vers. 8, 9.

(*b*) Not merely the capital, but all places are stations and signs of the judgment; vers. 10–15.

(*c*) Not merely the sin itself, but the generation that practice it must away to the place of punishment; ver. 16.

Ver. 2. When Jehovah speaks, the whole land must tremble. Land and people belong together, and He smites both, the field for man's sake (Gen. iii. 17). Hence the creation also sighs for the redemption which comes to it too with the glorious liberty of the sons of God (Rom. viii. 19). — Ver. 3. Jehovah is not a God afar off, but always going forth out of his holy places to see and to judge what is on the earth. — Ver. 4. His holy congregation lies so near his heart that for their sake he shakes the earth. Ver. 5. Great cities, great sins (Gen. iv. 17; Is. xiv. 21). — Ver. 6. When man builds without God, let it be ever so firmly fastened with stones to the strongest ground, the storm breaks from above, lays bare the foundation, and hurls the stones asunder. The best established church-system, when it becomes essentially sinful, is, in God's hands, a spider's web. The judgment deeds of God are declarative; while He lays bare the ground, He shows that it is sinful, and with that the annihilation is pronounced. — Ver. 8. God's spirit in the congregation itself sympathizes with, when it must punish, the congregation. His righteousness is a self-infliction upon his love. — Ver. 13. God retains accurately in mind the individual responsibilities and the starting-points of sin. Popular sins proceed from certain places, from certain classes, out over the whole; the whole is judged, but the root is not forgotten.

THEOPHYLACT (on ver. 1): The prophets spoke to hard and disobedient hearts; hence they said: The vision is divine, and from God is the Word; that the world might give heed to the Word, and not despise them. Matthew, however, spake to believing and obedient souls, and therefore placed nothing of this kind at the beginning. Or thus: The prophets saw in the spirit what they saw, since the Holy Spirit made the exhibition, and so they named it, a vision. But Matthew saw it not spiritually and in a representation, but had bodily intercourse with Him, heard Him by the senses, saw Him in the flesh; therefore he says not "vision," but Book of the generation of Jesus Christ.

OSIANDER (on ver. 3): At the present day it is not necessary in preaching to call persons and places by name, in which we must proceed very prudently, in order not to tear down more than we build up; and yet the preacher may use such freedom and plainness in indicating errors and vices that those who need improvement may feel themselves aimed at, and repent and be saved.

HENGSTENBERG (on ver. 11): The instances of play upon words are no mere empty sport. They have throughout a practical aim. The threatening is to be located by them. Whoever thought of one of the designated places, in him was the thought of the divine judgment quickened.

CH. B. MICHAELIS (on ver. 12): From Jehovah, he adds to make it plain that the calamity came not by blind chance, but was brought about by the supreme control of God, the righteous Judge.

STARKE: Ver. 1. Teachers must have a regular call, partly because of the divine command (Heb. v. 4), partly for the sake of order (1 Cor xiv. 40). Preachers must not preach differently from God's Word (1 Pet. iv. 11). Those who practice like sins may expect like punishments. — Ver. 2. The Lord be a witness in you; let the

Lord bear witness in you. For he who takes to heart the word concerning the judgment is convinced of his sins thereby, and feels the wrath of God. Even yet also God always puts in the mouth of his servants what He has to speak to his people, especially when teachers and hearers heartily call upon Him for this. — Ver. 3. So secure is the natural man, that he perceives not God's presence, nay even denies it, until He finally makes his presence known by notable punishments. God descends not actually, or as it regards his being, but He ceases to conceal himself, to be long-suffering, and begins to punish sin, to reveal and expose it. He assumes in effect another kind of presence. — Ver. 5. God pours not out his anger upon innocent people. "*Desine peccare et civitas non peribit*" (Ambros.). Divine services set up without God's word, although with good intention, are an abomination before God. And, — Ver. 6, God's judgments against the false systems of worship are terrible; for He is jealous of his own honor. — Ver. 7. Idolaters have in general more of worldly goods than those who serve the true God. — Ver. 10. It is often advisable to withhold our tears that the world may not rejoice over our misfortune. If one will weep he must do it before the outbreak of judgments, for when they are already here it is too late. — Ver. 11. When God will punish a land for its sins He takes away their courage from the people. — Ver. 12. That is the way of most men: that they mourn over the loss of their goods but not over their sins. On account of their bodily troubles, also, the righteous sometimes fall into great sorrow and fear. — Ver. 13. Offenses given remain not unpunished. — Ver. 14. Well may a stronghold proudly bear the name of deception, when it with its walls and good preparations causes the besiegers to be deceived in their hope. Princes should not trust in strong castles and towns, because they may be disappointed in them. — Ver. 16. Those who give themselves up to luxury are at last given up to miserable slavery. When a man makes his children effeminate, he makes for himself grief and heart-pangs.

Pfaff: Ver. 1. Think not, ye great sinners, that the word of the Lord which was formerly spoken concerning the Jews is of no concern to you, it is written for your punishment also. — Ver. 2. When the Lord speaks we should listen, yea, and give good heed: with great reverence, with all humility, with fear and trembling, with most willing obedience. — Ver. 8. God's servants properly mourn over the wretched condition of their congregations. It would indeed be a poor promise of their doing anything to improve them if they did not pour out their tears before God, and if it did not touch their heart that the people are drawing near to their judgment.

Rieger: Even to the last (Micah lived still after the fall of Samaria), God shows that He has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but, before the outbreak of such judgments, seeks once more by his word to save what can be saved. But He teaches us also that we should not, from the riches of his word, the crowd of gifted servants of God, the earnestness with which they urge the word of the Lord, be drawn into security, nor suppose ourselves on these accounts far from the evil day; but if often in respect to these circumstances, we seem to see planting and cultivation, it is often also near to the hewing down. — Ver. 2. What a case it is when the protection which they hitherto had enjoyed from the golden altar in the temple of God, is thus declared at an end! (Rev. ix. 13 ff.) — Ver. 4. All should truly feel their inability to stand before God, and not only with their power, but also with heart and courage, be like melted wax. — Ver. 7. How accurately God knows in what way a property has been gathered, and how He directs himself in punishment accordingly! — Ver. 11. How far God lets himself down in his word, in that He connects what He has determined in his holy temple with the names which we have given of old to our towns, in order the better to impress it upon us!

Quandt: That God by his prophets causes this dark picture to be drawn for the people, is itself a fact which affords hope. For if He had had pleasure in the death of the wicked, He would, straightway, and without wasting many words, have let them go to destruction. If He still takes the trouble to threaten, this threatening can only be a sign of his enduring love. The Last Day has many solemn types in the precursory days of the wrath of God; and the universal judgment at the last has many a preliminary token in the partial judgments that are taking place on particular peoples. — Ver. 4. The mountains symbolize the high and mighty in the creation; their melting down, therefore, signifies the annihilation of earthly greatness. The valleys symbolize the masses of the nations; the rending of them, therefore, their crumbling and being turned into dust, like water, signifies the annihilation of the nations. — Ver. 9. A preacher renders poor service to God and man, when he remains silent about the plague which God threatens to sinners; but when he has plagues to announce, he should never do it with laughing mouth, nor even with indifferent manner, but, like Micah, with sorrow and with tears, as being also a child of the people, who suffers when all suffer. Our God will have even for his Job's-posts messengers who are not only obedient but also full of sympathy.

[Dr. Pusey: Ver. 3. Since the nature of God is goodness, it is proper and co-natural to Him to be propitious, have mercy and spare. In this way, the place of God is his mercy. When then He passeth from the sweetness of pity to the rigor of equity, and, on account of our sins, showeth Himself severe (which is, as it were, alien from Him), He goeth forth out of his place. Cited from Dion. — Ver. 6. There is scarce a sadder natural sight than the fragments of human habitation, tokens of man's labor, his luxury, amid the rich beauty of nature when man himself is gone. For they are tracks of sin and punishment, man's rebellion and God's judgment, man's unworthiness of the good natural gifts of God. — Ver. 7. All forsaking of God being spiritual fornication from Him who made his creatures for himself, the *hires* are all that man could gain by that desertion of his God, all employed in man's intercourse with his idols, whether as bribing his idols to give him what are the gifts of God, or as himself bribed by them For there is no pure service, save that of the love of God. — Yet herein were the heathen more religious than the Christian worldling. The heathen did not offer an ignorant service to they knew not what. Our idolatry of mammon, as being less abstract, is more evident self worship, a more visible ignoring, and so a more open dethroning of God, a worship of a material prosperity, of which we seem ourselves to be the authors, and to which we habitually immolate the souls of men, so habitually that we have ceased to be conscious of it. — Ver. 10. The blaspheming of the enemies of God is the sorest part of his chastisements, — it

is hard to part with home, with country, to see all desolate, which one ever loved. But far, far above all, is it, if, in the disgrace and desolation, God's honor seems to be injured. — Ver. 12. Strange contradiction! Yet a contradiction, which the whole unchristian world is continually enacting; nay, from which Christians have often to be awakened, to look for good to themselves, nay, to pray for temporal good, while living in bitterness, bitter ways, displeasing to God. The words are calculated to be a religious proverb. "Living in sin," as we say, *dwelling in bitterness, she looked for good.* Bitternesses! for it is *an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee.* — Ver. 13. *Beginning of sin to* —, what a world of evil lies in the three words! — Tr.]

SECOND DISCOURSE.

Chapters II. 1–III. 12.[1]

1 Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! In the morn-
2 ing light they will practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.[2] And they
have coveted fields, and seized them, and houses, and taken them; and have op-
3 pressed a man and his house, even a man[3] and his possession. Therefore thus
saith Jehovah: Behold, I am devising against this family an evil, from which ye
shall not remove your necks; and ye shall not walk loftily, for an evil time is this.
4 In that day shall one take up a by-word concerning you, and wail a wail of woe,[4]
[and] say:

We are utterly destroyed!
He changeth the portion of my people;
How he removeth it from me![5]
To an apostate he divideth our fields!

5 Therefore thou shalt have none to cast a cord upon a lot [of ground] in the as-
6 sembly of Jehovah. Prophesy ye not, they prophesy.[6] They shall not prophesy to
7 [*or*, of] these: shame shall not depart. Thou that art called[7] the house of Jacob,
was the spirit of Jehovah impatient, or are these his doings? Do not my words
8 do good[8] to him that walketh uprightly? But lately my people has risen up as an
enemy: from off the garment ye strip the mantle, from those that pass by securely,
9 averse from war. The women of my people ye drive out of the house of their
10 delight; from their children ye take away my ornament forever. Arise ye, and
depart; for this is not the rest: because of pollution it shall destroy [you], and
11 with a sharp destruction. If a man walking in vanity[9] and falsehood should lie,
saying: I will prophesy to thee of wine and of strong drink, he would be a
prophet for this people.

12 I will surely gather all of thee, O Jacob,
I will surely collect the remnant of Israel,
I will put them together as sheep in the fold,
As a herd in the midst of his pasture;
It shall be noisy with men.
He that breaketh through has gone up before them:
They have broken through, and passed the gate,
And gone forth by it.
And their king passes on before them,
And Jehovah at their head.

III. 1 And I said: Hear now, ye heads of Jacob, and ye magistrates of the house of
2 Israel: is it not for you to know the right? Ye that hate good and love evil,
3 and tear their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; and who
eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones,
4 and divide them, as in the pot, and as flesh within the kettle. Then will they cry
to Jehovah, and he will not answer them; and he will hide his face from them at
that time, even as they have made their deeds evil.

5 Thus saith Jehovah concerning the prophets that lead my people astray, who
biting with their teeth cry: Peace; and he that giveth nothing for their mouth,
against him they sanctify war.

6 Therefore a night shall be for you without a vision,
And darkness for you without divination,
And the sun shall go down over the prophets,
And the day be dark over them.
7 And the seers shall be ashamed,
And the diviners shall blush;
And they shall cover the beard, all of them;
Because there is no answer of God.

8 Nevertheless I am filled with power, through the spirit of Jehovah,[10] and judgment,
and boldness, to announce unto Jacob his transgression, and unto Israel his sin.

9 Hear this now, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and ye magistrates of the house
10 of Israel, that abhor judgment; yea, they pervert all that is right, building Zion
11 with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. Her heads judge for a bribe, and her
priests teach for a reward, and her prophets divine for money, and lean upon
Jehovah, saying; Is not Jehovah among us? evil shall not come upon us.

12 Therefore, for your sakes
Zion shall be ploughed as a field,
And Jerusalem shall become heaps,
And the mountain of the house high places of a forest.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 We follow Kleinert's course in printing these chapters, as if less decidedly poetical than the remainder of the book. In some parts the style gives reason for this procedure, yet interpreters generally make no such distinction; and to those who differ with our author in not making a separate division of these two chapters, his conception of the form of the discourse will seem particularly arbitrary. — Tr.]

[2 Ver. 1. כִּי יֶשׁ־לְאֵל יָדָם. There is in this, almost certainly, a reminiscence of Gen. xxxi. 29 (cf. Prov. iii. 27; Deut. xxviii. 32; Neh. ver. 5); otherwise there would be much plausibility in the rendering: "For their hand is as a God." — Tr.]

[3 Ver. 2. We must fail somewhat here in representing the original, from the lack in our language of a word for "man" as generically human being (אִישׁ, here = ἄνθρωπος, *homo*, *Mensch*), in distinction from "man" *sensu eminenti* (גֶּבֶר, ἀνήρ, *vir*, *Mann*). — Tr.]

[4 Ver. 4. So Pusey happily indicates the paronomasia in נְהִי נִהְיָה נָהָה: "wail a wailing wail" would be still more analogous in sound, if the expression could be allowed.

Kleinert, sustained by Gesenius and others, separates the ἅπαξ λεγ. נִהְיָה, from the preceding, and translates as if it were a part. Niph. of הָיָה: (it was; *Ilium fuit*) "All is over! they will say," etc. This is ingenious, almost too much so, having the appearance of a modern improvement. For although the form was long ago regarded by some as Niph. pret. or part. of הָיָה, it seems always to have been with a different interpretation. Vid. Pococke in loc. — Tr.]

[5 Ver. 4. לִי, dat. incom.: "for me," "to my hurt." — Tr.]

[6 Ver. 6. אַל־תַּטִּפוּ יַטִּיפוּן. נָטַף, "to drop," "drip," "distil," is here, as in other places (cf. Eng. Vers. Am. vii. 16), applied to the utterance of discourse. As to the reference of the several verbs here, and in the remainder of the verse, there has been the greatest diversity of opinion. One can hardly know how far any interpretation which one may prefer agrees with what has been taught before. We take it thus: The ungodly crowd, weary of the pious and faithful inculcations of the true prophets, meet their exhortations to repentance with the contemptuous order to stop preaching. "Prophesy not," in their taunting sense is, Don't keep driveling, drooling. Compare (we shrink from quoting it here, yet we think it well illustrates the spirit with which the mass always meet their pious advisers) the slang of our rabble: "Dry up!" — "They prophesy" (drivel) is thus the expression of the prophet, retaliating in the right use of the word which their feeble sarcasm had suggested. What follows, in the most literal translation, "they shall not prophesy to these; shame (lit. shames) shall not depart," may then be understood as God through his prophet taking them at their word: "Even so; people like these shall cease to enjoy the benefit of that which they call driveling; I will give them up to their own wish, and the shames, which my word should have turned away, shall not depart, but come upon them." This we think consistent with the most direct rendering of the verse word for word.

Kleinert's somewhat modified view will be seen in the Exeg. note, where he gives a synopsis also of the principal recent translations. Pococke *in loc.* gives a good and tedious account of what had come into men's heads about it in previous ages. We may add, that Zunz renders (less literally than usual): Preach not, ye that preach! let none preach to such, (that) they bring not disgraces upon them. — Tr.]

[7 Ver. 7. הֶאָמוּר בֵּית־יַעֲקֹב. Our author denies that the usual rendering of this, which we also have, with some hesitation, adopted, can be harmonised with what follows, but Maurer explains very well: "*O dicta domus Jacobi* (in

quam tot ac tanta beneficia contulit Jova!) . . . . *detrectatis vos quidem audire quas facimus minas* (ver. 6). *Sed quæ tandem causa est minarum? deusne? at ille quam longe alium se exhibet agentibus recte! In causa esse ipsos Israelites dicit versus proximus.*"

[8 Ver. 7. Or, "are not my words good," etc.?]

[9 Ver. 11. Lit. "wind." Maurer renders not badly: "*Si quis iret, (et) ventum et mendacium mentiretur.*" Dr. Kleinert finds the apodosis here begining with כְּזָב, which וְהָיָה would then merely continue. Thus he puts vers. 12, 13 into the mouth of the supposed false prophet, as grammatically the object of מַטִּיף. We think rather, that the conj. in והיה must almost necessarily mark the apodosis, and that the sentiment of the two following verses is too unlike the probable expression of the false prophet to be balanced by the alleged antithesis in ch. iii. 1. — Tr.]

[10 Ch. iii. 8. The absence of the conj., and use of אֶת with רוּחַ י׳ alone of the four nouns well warrants the idea of the Eng. Vers., adopted by Pusey, that "spirit of Jehovah" stands out of the series, as rather the ground and cause of all the rest — *by* the spirit, etc. — Tr.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

As the first discourse fell into two parts, by the parallel between Samaria and Jerusalem, so this second one falls into the two nearly equal divisions, chaps. ii. and iii., thus carrying through the principle of parallelism. The ground of division, however, is here not the analogy, but the antithesis of the leading thoughts. Thus chap. ii. begins with a description of the corruption of the great (ver. 1–5), and then proceeds to depict the current falsehood of the sham prophets (ver. 6–13), the essence of which is comprehended at the close, in a deceitful but brilliant prediction of the certain prosperity of Judah in the afflictions which are soon to be experienced (vers. 12, 13). Corresponding to this, chap. iii. also begins with denunciation of the guilty nobles (vers. 1–4), and then turns likewise to the judgment against false prophecy (vers. 5–13), at the conclusion of which, however, Micah communicates the substance of his genuine proclamation, so opposite to their spurious illusions (ver. 12).

This obvious plan, which represents the discourse as a double climax, is of itself a sufficient justification of the compass which we ascribe to the whole. With those interpreters who connect chaps. i. and ii. outwardly in one discourse (Hitzig, Umbreit, Hengst., Hävernick, Keil) we, although not denying the interior connection of chaps. i.–v. in general, cannot agree, for this reason, if no other, that chap. i. manifestly bears the character of a pure prophecy, complete in itself, while in the division before us, from beginning to end, rebuke and opposition to the reigning sins of the day are the main characteristic; with those who feel obliged to put a full period to the discourse before ch. iii., we differ, because they rend asunder the beautiful symmetry of chaps. ii. and iii. The reason given for this separation, that a new beginning is marked by the "Hear, I pray, you" (iii. 1), proves nothing, since the same summons is found ch. iii. 9, where no critic could suppose a new discourse to begin.

Ch. ii. *The Thesis*, vers. 1–5. *The Nobility*, vers. 1, 2. *Their Conduct*. The discourse runs parallel to the similar denunciation of Isaiah (v. 8 ff.) against the sins of the higher ranks, and like that, this takes, from the beginning, the character of a "woe." **Woe to them that devise iniquity, and prepare evil on their beds; in the morning light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand.** Wickedness is more criminal in proportion as it is more deliberate. The gradation from the design to its accomplishment, elsewhere often represented by the steps of conception, pregnancy, parturition (Ps. vii. 15 et al.), is here described, without figure, by the stages of חשׁב "to devise," form the plan (Ps. xxxvi. 5), פעל, "to prepare ways and means," and עשׂה "to put in execution" (Is. xli. 4). The construction proceeds from the partic. to the verbum finit., as in 1 Sam. ii. 8; Ewald, § 350 b. Upon their bed they think it out, at the time when the pious still their heart (Ps. iv. 5; i. 2); in the light of morning they carry it out; — their first thought, therefore, at the gray dawn, is not of prayer (Ps. v. 4) but of covetousness: for it is in the power of their hand, *i. e.*, they are able to do it and no one hinders them (Gen. xxxi. 29; Neh. v. 5), cf. the LXX. at Gen. l. c.: ἰσχύει ἡ χείρ μου. Hitzig and Keil translate: "for their hand is their God" [*ist zum Gott*], their power avails to them as a God, none else do they fear. But this would require יֵשׁ יָדָם לֵאלֹהֵיהֶם, Hab. i. 11.

Ver. 2. We are now told wherein these their evil deeds consist; **And they covet** (against the law, Ex. xx. 17, whose expression חמד is not without emphasis repeated here) **fields and seize them; and oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.** The transgression of the laws for the protection of each man's real estate and inheritance (Lev. xxv. 23 ff.), by destroying the property of the peasants and oppressing them themselves, this is what the prophet, like his contemporary, Isaiah, ch. v. 8 ff., most bitterly reproves, as being the surest way to the creation of a helpless proletariate, to the hostile separation of proprietors from those without property, and so to the ruin of the national welfare and the popular life. (The second בית may, for the sake of the parallelism, be referred to the household or family, as in Gen. vii. 1). This one breach of the law is sufficient to provoke God's anger and judgment upon this generation.[1]

Ver. 3–5: **Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, behold, I devise evil upon this generation,** [family]. The phrase חשׁב רע is emphatically repeated from ver. 1, to set clearly before our eyes the *jus talionis* prevalent in God's providence (Ex. xxi. 23; Is. xxxiii 1). "This generation," is, as in Am. iii. 1, the whole people; cf. the γενεά, Matt. xii. 41, 42. There is the same antithesis to the "oppression" in ver. 2, in the following phrase: Jehovah devises evil, **from which ye shall not withdraw your necks;** like a yoke becomes the hard rule of the stranger on the fat cows of Israel (Am. iv. 1), and does not allow itself to be shaken off (Jer. xxvii. 12), **And ye shall not walk loftily** — רוֹמָה, acc. adv. with verbs of going (Ps. lviii.

1 ["Such is the fire of concupiscence, raging within, that, as those seized by burning fevers cannot rest, no bed suffices them, so no houses or fields content these. Yet no more than seven feet of earth will suffice them soon. 'Death only owns how small the frame of man.'" Rib. apud. Pusey in loc. — Tr.]

9; Ges., *Lehrg.* § 178, 4); the necks that are used to carrying themselves stiffly (Is. iii. 16) will have to bend; **for an evil time is this,** in which depression of spirits and gloomy silence comes over the people (Am. v. 13). This also is said with an application: your guilt causes the present to be an evil time before God, and so God will bring a time which is evil for you, the πονηρόν, *sensu activo* and *passivo* at once; Eph. v. 6; Matt. vi. 13.

Ver. 4. **In that day will one** (the verbs are used impersonally, Ewald, § 294 b 2 γ.) **take up a taunt against thee** (cf. Hab. ii. 6; Is. xiv. 4), **and utter a lamentation.** What in the mind of the adversaries is derision, is, in the mouth of friends and the members of this community, a lamentation: cf. i. 10; and what follows is spoken from the position of the latter; **all is over,** will one say, נִהְיָה, *actum est*, all is lost, cf. Dan. viii. 27, and also the γέγονε, Rev. xvi. 17.[1] **We are utterly destroyed.** On the form with *u* instead of *o*, cf. Olsh., § 263 b. "The obscure vowel is adapted to the sound of lamentation," Hitzig. — **The portion of my people he** (Jehovah, cf. i. 9) **takes back.** הֵמִיר of taking back of a promised benefit (Ps. xv. 4). Thus God repents of having granted it (Gen. vi. 6). **How he withdraws it from me!** — Cf. ver. 3, against Hitzig's translation: how he lets me depart! **To the apostate** — *i. e.*, to the heathen (Jer. xlix. 4), who is born and grows up in apostasy from God — **he divideth our fields!**

Ver. 5. **Therefore,** the prophecy proceeds, looking back to ver. 3, **thou** (all Israel, transition, as i. 14) **shalt have no one to cast a measuring line on a lot of ground** (Judg. i. 3) **in the assembly of Jehovah.** For to the congregation of God belong the lots of ground so long only as they bear in mind that it is God's land (Lev. xxv. 23); but since they, by the sins named in vers. 1, 2, appropriate it to themselves, there is no longer a congregation of Jehovah, and the owner, God, gives his land to the apostate, who have been rebellious from their birth, and so with less guilt. The words of the prophet are keen, and provoke to contradiction. Imagining this present to him, he comes to the new turn of the discourse.

Vers. 6–13. *State of the Prophetic Function.* Ver. 6. The people will not listen to any genuine prophecy (Am. v. 10). This second reproof also runs parallel to one of Isaiah (ch. xxviii. 7 ff.). Indeed, the prophet associates Isaiah with himself in thought, when he makes the people call out to a plurality of prophets: **"Drivel not," they drivel.** The expression הִטִּיף (from נטף, therefore prop. "to let drop," trickle (Am. ix. 13), to pour out copious discourse, to prophesy = נבא, cf. הִבִּיעַ, to let bubble, gush forth; Ps. xciv. 4), appears here, as in Am. vii. 16, in the mouth of the malignant opposition, whose organ the false prophets are, to carry with it a tone of contempt. (But cf. Ezek. xxi. 2, 9.) The prophet straightway returns this contempt; their indignation is in reality an unreasonable driveling, as he then (ver. 7 c) further evinces. First, however, he answers their objection by the double sentence, 6 b, c, which, according to the analogy of the following verse, is best understood as an impatient question. **Shall they not drivel for that? shall the shame not depart?** For such rhetorical questions without the particle of interrogation, cf. Hab. ii. 19; Jer. xxv. 29; Hos. xiii. 14. — Ewald, Hitzig, Maurer, Umbreit, Caspari: "Let them not prate of these things; the reviling has no end." Ch. V. Michaelis, Hengstenberg, Keil: "If they prophesy not to these, the reproach will not depart."[2] — The preceding verb stands in the sing. (Gesen., § 147, a), and כְּלִמּוֹת signifies not merely revilings but everything, which can serve as reproach and ruin to one (Is. xxx. 3).

Ver. 7. The first words of this verse also are an impatient exclamation: **O for what is spoken in the house of Israel!** cf. on this *acc. indignationis*, Ewald, § 101, 6; Is. xxix. 16. In like manner, Umbreit. — Caspari, Hitzig: *num dicendum?* But the gerundive idea is not contained in the part. pass. Rosenmüller and Keil: "O thou so called house of Jacob!" But that in connection with the following gives no sense. בֵּית יַעֲקֹב is not *stat. abs.* but *acc. loci*, while אָמוּר, regarded as a verbal form, is (as Is. xxvi. 3: if he is stayed on thee): "O for the fact that it is said in the house of Jacob," as follows, cf. 1 Kings vii. 48; Ruth i. 9.[3] The prophet (ver. 7 a), quite in the manner of ver. 6, brings up the words of the opposers, in order then to reply to them. They say: **is then the spirit of Jehovah become** short, *i. e.*, **impatient?** That would be against the word of God (Ex. xxxiv. 6), to which they appeal like Satan before Christ (Matt. iv. 6). **Or are these** — the plagues prophesied by the prophets — **his deeds?** Should he plague Israel whom he is wont to foster as his first-born son (Ex. iv. 23). The prophet replies to this foolish speech, which claims the promise for itself regardless of the condition, by reminding them that God remains indeed the same, but that they (ver. 8 ff.). have changed, so that the promise can no longer avail for them. **Do not, in fact, my words deal kindly with him that walks uprightly?** "The word יָשָׁר, as an appositive to the person in הוֹלֵךְ (Job xxxi. 26), could take the place which the emphasis resting on it assigns to it, because as an adjective it draws to itself the article belonging to *holech*." Hitzig.

Ver. 8. **But lately** — properly: yesterday — **my people has stood up as an enemy.** My words would have remained kind, as they were, but you have sought hostility. The hostile attitude still continues, as the imperf. indicates. On the use of לְ cf. Ewald, § 217, d. a. 1. — Others, retaining the causative signification of קוֹמֵם, translate: but my people make me stand up as their enemy. But the suffix is wanting, and the Polel is not necessarily causative.[4] — And in what does this hostility consist? **Off from the garment ye strip the mantle of those who in** secure confidence of safety (Lev. xxv. 18) **pass by, averse from war,** *i. e.*, peaceably (Ps. cxx. 7). The part. pass. שׁוּבֵי takes the place of the part. act. שָׁב (Olsh., § 245 a, cf. Ps. cxii. 7).

Ver. 9. And as they spare not the peaceable, so still less the defenseless: **the women of my**

1 [Cf. Text. and Gram. in loc.].

2 [Cf. Text. and Gram. in loc. — Tr.]

3 [Cf. Text. and Gram. on this ver. — Tr.]

4 A good connection for the whole verse would be afforded if, taking the sentence דְּבָ׳, κ.τ.λ., as parenthetical, we should translate: "but lately, when my people," namely, the northern kingdom, Israel, already attacked, "stood up" (cf. Job xx. 27) against the enemy, Assyria, "from off the garment ye stripped off the mantle, from them that passed by securely," those namely, that fled from the war.

people, the unprotected widows (Is. x. 2), **ye drive out of the house of their delight,** the house inherited from the husband, to which they are attached by the memory of their wedded love (Cant. vii. 7; Ecc. ii. 8); **from their children** (the suff. is in the sing. not to denote the children severally as sons of the widows, fatherless (Keil), for that would be a *nota mala*, but because נָשִׁים is taken collectively i. 9), **ye take away my ornament forever.** To belong to Jehovah is the honor and ornament of every individual Israelite (Jer. ii. 11; Ps. lxxiii. 28); whoever thrusts out the children in Israel among the heathen takes away this ornament of God (1 Sam. xxvi. 19).[1]

From this results now (ver. 10), of itself as it were, the threatening, according to the law of the *talio* (cf. on ver. 3, "those that expel shall be expelled"): **Arise ye, and go: for here is not the rest** (Zech. ix. 1) which was promised to the righteous people in Canaan (Deut. xii. 9 f.; Ps. xcv. 11; cf. Heb. iii. 11 ff.): **for uncleanness worketh destruction** (cf. Lev. xviii. 25; Is. liv. 16), **and that a sharp destruction.** So must God's prophet speak (vers. 3, 6), whether the hearers regard it as driveling or not. Were he, indeed, one of the prophets whom they would fain hear, (cf. Is. xxx. 10), the proclamation would sound very differently; what they announce we are told in vers. 11-13.

Ver. 11. **If a man followed vanity,** רוּחַ, as in Is. xxvi. 18, **and falsehood** (לֹ, *cum part.* as Ps. lxxxi. 14; 2 Sam. xviii. 12), **he would lie** (the apodosis ἀσυνδέτως, as Deut. xxxii. 29): **I will prophesy to thee,** people of Israel, **of wine and strong drink,** *i. e.* either: of these things, that they shall be bestowed on you, or better: so that my predictions shall come to you as sweet as wine and strong drink, or also: prophesy to thee at the banquet (cf. ver. 6).[2] **And would prophesy to this people:**[3] namely, what follows in vers. 12, 13. וְהָיָה continues the apodosis begun by כִּזֵּב, and, with the part. takes the place of the simple הִטִּיף, while hinting besides that this prophesying is permanent (Ewald, § 168 c.).[4] Instead of the verbal construction לָעָם, the part. is construed as a noun with *stat. abs.* as ver. 8 (Hab. ii. 15; Ps. xxx. 4).

Ver. 12. To the part. is adjoined, as ver. 7, the direct discourse: **I will surely gather all of thee,** so would the liars, clothing themselves in the garb of the old prophets, prophesy in the name of Jehovah, **O, Jacob, I will surely collect the remnant of Israel.** That, indeed, a remnant only can be spoken of, who shall be gathered (according to Obad. 17; Joel i. 5, cf. Am. v. 15), even the false prophets know; but in view of the destruction of Samaria, they might tickle the ears of the men of Judah by pretending that the whole (כֻּלָּךְ) of Judah, unpurified, was this remnant, and would undoubtedly enter alone into the promise. They might plausibly appeal to the precedent set by Hosea, who (Hos. ii. 2 [i. 11], cf. ch. i.) had said that after the punishment of Israel and the bestowment of favor on Judah, both would gather about One Head. They evidently refer to the יַחְדָּו in that passage when they go on to say: **I will bring them (Israel) together as sheep in the field, as a herd in the midst of its pasture.** The appellative signification of בָּצְרָה, *septum-ovile*, is quite possible according to the etymology, is found in the oldest versions, and is sufficiently supported by the parallelism of "pasture."— So Hitzig, Umbreit, Caspari; Hengstenberg, on the contrary: the Moabite, Keil: the Edomite Bozrah. — The article with the suffix in הַדִּבְרוֹ, as Josh. vii. 21; Ewald, § 290, d. And not merely Judah and Israel in their present condition, but also all the scattered and sold will return, of whom Obadiah (ver. 20) before, and Joel (iv. 6 ff.) had made mention: **They,** the fold and pasture of Israel, **shall swarm** (תְּהִימֶנָה instead of תְּהִימֶינָה, Olsh., § 244, e.) **with men,** for the multitude of the men also is a necessary element of the promises of prosperity (Hos. ii. 2 [i. 11]). הִים is, like הוּם, a cognate form for הָמָה, הָמַם (Ps. lv. 3). But how do they suppose that this can take place when, after the destruction of Samaria, the northern part of the holy land is inclosed by the Assyrians round about? This question is answered by

Ver. 13. **There will go up before them** — a traditional Messianic expression (Ob. ver. 21) — **He that breaks through:** the head, the leader whom they will set over them, according to Hos. ii. 2. He will place himself at their head in the holy city whither God will gather Israel, will collect them into an army and break the ring of the heathen.[5] **They break through, pass into the gate** (cf. on ch. i. 11), **and go out through it. And their king passes on before them,** for no other

1 [Primarily, the glory, comeliness was the fitting apparel which God had given them, and laid upon them, and which oppressors stripped off from them. But it includes all the gifts of God, wherewith God would array them. Instead of the holy home of parental care, the children grew up in want and neglect, away from all the ordinances of God, it may be, in a strange land. Pusey *in loc.* — Tr.].

2 ["Man's conscience must needs have some plea in speaking falsely of God. The false prophets had to please the rich men, to embolden them in their self-indulgence, to tell them that God would not punish. They doubtless spoke of God's temporal promises to his people, the *land flowing with milk and honey*, His promise of abundant harvest and vintage, and assured them, that God would not withdraw these, that He was not so precise about his law. Micah tells them in plain words, what it all came to; it was a prophesying of *wine and strong drink*." Pusey *in loc.* — Tr.].

3 Or, adhering more closely to the accents: If a man followed the wind and lied deceit: I will prophesy for thee to wine and strong drink, he would prophesy to this people; etc. The translation above is logically more perspicuous, and appropriate to the Heb. words.

4 [Cf. Gram. and Text. note. — Tr.]

5 [Dr. Pusey expresses well the opposite and more satisfactory view, that the *breaking through* and the *going forth*, is out of captivity. "The image is not of conquest, but of deliverance. They *break through*, not to enter in, but to *pass through the gate* and *go forth*. The wall of the city is ordinarily *broken through*, in order to make an entrance, or to secure to a conqueror the power of entering in at any time, or by age and decay. But there the object is expressed, to *go forth*. Plainly then they were confined before, as in a prison; and the gate of the prison was burst open, to set them free. It is there the same image as when God says by Isaiah: *I will say to the North, give up: and to the South, hold not back*, or, *Go ye forth of Babylon, Say ye, the Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob*," etc. This author's long note on the verse before us affords an admirable specimen of the manner in which he connects a treasure of evangelical sentiment with the brief hints of ancient prophecy. But it is often rather put on than drawn out; it is a crystallization of the gospel around a Hebrew sentence rather than a blossoming forth from the bud of clearly enfolded truth."— Tr.]

than the king, out of the house of David, can be that "Breaker" (Am. ix. 11), **and Jehovah at their head,** as in the marches in the desert (Num. x. 35; Ex. xiii. 21).

The foregoing explanation of vers. 12–13, which regards these as the quintessence of the golden promises with which the false prophets steal the favor of the people, rests not only on the plan of the whole discourse (chaps. ii., iii.) but also especially on the impossibility of establishing otherwise a clear connection between vers. 11 and 12, and on the numerous references of the following chapter. The objections which have been raised against it, particularly that from the term "remnant," have been met in the exegesis. The passage is similarly explained by J. D. Michaelis, Hartmann, Ewald, Hofmann in the *Schriftbeweis*, while the majority, however, and among them of recent authors, Hengstenberg, Hitzig, Caspari, Keil [Maurer, Pusey], separate the last two verses from the connection, and explain them as a Messianic promise from Micah's point of view.

But according to this latter understanding of the subject, it is unintelligible how, immediately after this, the *antithesis* (ch. iii.) can begin, as indicated by the manifestly adversative וָאֹמַר, "but I say" (cf. Is. xxiv. 16), and by the diametrically opposite prophecy, which continues, with the express assurance (ver. 8), that it gives the proper sentiment of the prophet, to the end of the chapter and culminates in the last verse.

Chapter III.

Here also the discourse applies directly (vers. 1–4) *to the nobility*, and particularly here to those in high official station, as called guardians of the administration of justice. **Hear, now, ye heads of Jacob, and ye judges** (קְצִין = Arab. Kâdi) **of the house of Israel, Is it not for you** (2 Chron. xiii. 5), for you **above all, to know the right.** To know = to regard, give heed to (Is. xlii. 25).

Ver. 2. **Ye that hate good, and love evil, that steal away their skin from off them,** from the house of Israel (ver. 1), **and their flesh from off their bones.** They may well be pleased with the prophesying concerning the "flock" of Israel (ii. 12), for meanwhile they have the privilege of shearing and flaying the flock.

Ver. 3. **Yea, those who eat** (the discourse turns to the third person, for in vision the prophet sees how those addressed have already stopped their ears, and turned away from him, and he makes his complaint before God and the congregation) **the flesh of my people,** etc.

Ver. 4. **Then** — at the time of the revelation of the wrath of God (cf. Ps. ii. 5; Prov. i. 18), at the very time for which their lying prophets hold out to them the prospect of nothing but golden hills, — **will they rather cry to Jehovah, and he will not answer them,** for they are not worthy of the gracious promise (Hos. ii. 22 ff.), since they have let their day of grace pass by; **and will hide his face from them** (impf. Hiphil with *e* instead of *i*, as Ps. xxv. 9) **at that time even as they have made their deeds evil.** Jehovah's countenance is the fountain of life (Ps. civ. 29); when it is turned away it is death; He will not break through before them, but will let them perish in misery, as their deeds deserve; cf. the last words, with ii. 3, 7.

Ver. 5 ff. Transition to the false prophets, parallel to ii. 6 ff. **Thus saith Jehovah against** (עַל, as Jon. i. 2) **the prophets who lead my people astray,** God's people are Israel, and he who hurts them, hurts God (Zech. ii. 8). The prophets should be eyes for the people (Is. xxix. 10), and without prophets the people are blind; but whoever leads the blind astray is accursed (Deut. xxvii. 18). They lead astray because they are bribed by the great (ver. 1 ff.). **Who, when they have anything to bite in their teeth** (cf. ii. 11, 12), *i. e.* who when they receive any good to eat, **cry, Peace** — prophesy as desired; **and whoever gives them nothing for their mouth, against him they sanctify war** [Kleinert: declare a sacred war]. By the antithesis of the two sentences, the meaning, "to bite," "to chew," is demanded for נָשַׁךְ: the construction of the first [Hebrew] sentence is *parataxis pro syntaxi*, and the first finite verb as following what precedes has been changed into a participle: they sit with the rich at their tables, eat their bread, and sing their song. The description answers completely to that which the Greek tragic poets, from a like moral indignation, give of the venal soothsayers of their time (cf. *e. g.* Soph., *Antig.*, 1036; Æsch., *Agam.*, 1168). To sanctify a war is the solemn formula for the declaration of a war which should be undertaken for the honor of God against enemies (Joel iv. 9, cf. Is. xiii. 3); for by the destruction of his foes God is proved a Holy One (Is. v. 16). The false prophets abuse this formula, as they do all the others of true prophecy (cf. on ii. 12 f.).

Ver. 6. **Therefore, because you darken God's light in the daytime, there shall be to you a night without vision, yea, a darkness shall be for you without divination.** The punctuators read the 3d præt. fem. impers.: "and it shall be dark for you." But, according to the parallelism the substantive חֲשֵׁכָה (*choshkah*), with dagesh lene is to be preferred. The word *chasôn*, vision, which is elsewhere used of the genuine visions of true prophets (Is. i. 1), is here defined by the parallel *kesom*, the comprehensive designation of all the heathen arts of augury (Deut. xviii. 10, 14; Ezek. xxi. 26). In the use of the word *chasôn*, however, there lies the idea that the night will so break upon the people that all prophecy, even the genuine, will cease, all answer from Jehovah (cf. ver. 4; Lam. ii. 9). Indeed, the latter half of the verse says the same: **And the sun shall go down over the prophets,** — all of them — **and the day be dark over them.** The words are designed to complete the picture of the visionless night in the first member of the verse (cf. Am. viii. 9), and thus can hardly have the reference, which Hitzig supposes, to the eclipse of the sun on the 5th of June 716 B. C., the day in which Romulus died (Dion. Halic. ii. 56).

Ver. 7. **And the seers will be ashamed, and the diviners blush** (cf. 1 Kings xviii. 29). "Their lying being punished in its results, they become, since God by no word of revelation helps them out of their necessity, entirely disgraced." Hitzig. **And cover the beard, all of them,** they will hide the face up to the nostrils, a sign of sorrow (Lev. xiii. 45), here of shame (cf. Ezek. xxiv. 17), as elsewhere the covering of the head (Jer. xiv. 4), **Because there is no answer from God,** מַעֲנֵה, subst. as Prov. xv. 1, 23; some MSS. give the better sounding part. with seghol in ult.: for God answers not.

Ver. 8. To the liars Micah sets himself and his prophesying in contrast. **But I am filled with**

power (cf. Jer. i. 18). This first accus. (cf. Gesen., § 138, 3, b), is explained epexegetically by what follows; with power, *i. e.* **with the spirit of Jehovah,**[1] in whom alone is power (Is. xxxi. 3), while those speak out of their own spirit (Ezek. xiii. 3; Jer. v. 13); **and with judgment** (judicial sentence), by metonymy for: with an impartial (opposed to ver. 5) utterance of God's righteous judgment (Jer. i. 16), which the adversaries should indeed know, but did not wish to know: **and with courage,** which is not to be bought off by a dainty meal, like the slavish soul of the false prophets (ver. 5); **to declare to Jacob his transgression,** not the lies of false peace (ver. 5; ii. 11), **and to Israel his sin.**

Ver. 9, follows with a summary view of the final consequences of this sin and its punishment. **Hear this, now, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and judges of the house of Israel who abhor judgment, and make crooked that which is straight,** through the desperate arts of a sophistry which perverts right because it has the power (vii. 3; Is. v. 20).

Ver. 10. **Building Zion with blood-guiltiness** (Ps. xxvi. 9, cf. Mic. vi. 16, with 1 Kings xxi.), **and Jerusalem with iniquity.** They care not that the city in which they build their palaces (Hab. iii. 6; Jer. xxii. 13) with the gain of sin and bloodshed, is God's own holy city (Is. i. 21).[2] When the prophet remembers Jerusalem, his angry and complaining word passes over to her.

Ver. 11. **Her heads judge for a bribe,** therefore to the injury of the innocent poor (Ps. xv. 5; Ezek. xxii. 12), **and her priests teach for a reward;** while it was their duty to give (Lev. x. 11; Deut. xvii. 11; xxxiii. 10) information concerning the decisions of the law (cf. *e. g.* Hag. ii. 16 ff.), they receive a fee for every consultation, so that the poor have, in fact, no part in the rights established by God (Is. v. 23), nay, can attain to no knowledge at all thereof. **And their prophets divine for money,** according to direction, like the heathen prophets (Num. xxii. 6 f.), **and appeal to** [lean upon] **Jehovah, saying: Is not Jehovah among us?** or, as the adversaries of Jeremiah; here is Jehovah's temple (Jer. vii. 4): Therefore, **no evil can come upon us.**

Ver. 12. **Therefore,** so culminates in the closing verse, the threatening begun in ver. 8, now in the sharpest contrast to the conclusion of the preceding chapter; therefore, **for your sakes,** because you make the Lord's temple a den of murderers (Jer. vii. 11), **Zion shall be ploughed as** [Kleinert: into, acc. of result, Ges., § 139, 2] **a field, and Jerusalem** not less than the previously destroyed Samaria, **become heaps** — the stones built up with blood will be torn asunder, because Jehovah makes inquisition for the blood; **and the mountain of the house,** הַבַּיִת, the temple, as 1 Kings vi.–viii., **high places of a forest!** On the Aram. plural עִיִּין, cf. Gesen., § 87, 1, a. On the threatening of Is. xxxii. 13, 14; on the incidental meaning of בָּמוֹת, on i. 5.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The people of Israel are formed, as a holy seed, to inherit the blessing. To this end they have a holy land (ii. 4), a holy place, and the Holy God in their midst (iii. 11), who answers them by the mouth of the prophets (iii. 7).

But the straightforward development of the mission of Israel has been interrupted. The whole substance of the popular life in these holy arrangements has been thoroughly poisoned with the sin of seeking their own, and proudly trusting in their own power, instead of meditating on God's law (Ps. i. 1), and trusting alone in his power (Ps. ii. 12). But as a people stands toward God so He toward the people; with the froward He will show himself froward. When the people devise iniquity He devises it against them; when brother prepares destruction for brother, destruction is prepared for all from on high. He has given to Israel the portion of goods that fell to him, but in his hands it has been squandered, and falls to those to whom it does not belong.

The people is a body made up of members duly organized But no community, even that which is best and most divinely organized, has any guarantee of continuance (to say nothing of the eternal promise), unless its individual members, with a full comprehension of their calling, stand and labor therein (iii. 1–8). And radical corruption exists where *that* rank which ought to serve as the conduit for the stream of life from the heart of God to the whole life of the people has become putrid, and sends forth, instead of the juices of life, deadly fountains; where between the natural opposition of the arrogant and desponding thoughts of men, for which the Word of God, under all circumstances, has a somewhat unwelcome sound, and between the cowardice and self-indulgence of the servants of God, the compromise of false prophecy has been agreed upon. We recognize the preaching of lies by its one-sided emphasis on the promises of God's Word, agreeably to the natural desire of men, while it forgets the conditions of those promises; by its sealing the crowd of hearers that may present itself for the congregation of God, and assuring them all, without exception, and without the purification resulting from divine judgment, of a share in his salvation. The Gospel has come for sinners, it is true, but not for drunkards and debauchees; that is, sinners

1 [Cf. Gram. and Text. note. — The "power" is rather the ability to exert a holy influence given from God. — Tr.].

2 [" Or, by *blood* he may mean that they indirectly took away life, in that through wrong judgments, extortion, usury, fraud, oppression, reducing wages, or detaining them, they took away what was necessary to support life. Or it may be that these men thought to promote the temporal prosperity of Jerusalem, by doings which were unjust, oppressive, crushing to their inferiors. So Solomon, in his degenerate days, made the *yoke* upon his people and his service *grievous*, so ambitious monarchs by large standing armies, or filling their exchequers, drain the life-blood of their people. The physical condition and stature of the poorer population in much of France was lowered permanently by the conscriptions under the first emperor. In our wealthy nation the term poverty describes a condition of other days. We have had to coin a new name to designate the misery, offspring of our material prosperity. From our wealthy towns (as from those of Flanders,) ascends to heaven against us, "the cry of 'pauperism,' *i. e.*, the cry of distress, arrived at a condition of system and of power, and, by an unexpected curse, issuing from the very development of wealth. The political economy of unbelief has been crushed by facts on all the theatres of human activity and industry" (Lacordaire). Truly we *build up Zion with blood*, when we cheapen luxuries and comforts at the price of souls, use Christian toil like brute strength, tempt men to dishonesty and women to other sin, to eke out the scanty wages which alone our selfish thirst for cheapness allows, heedless of everything save of our individual gratification, or of the commercial prosperity which we have made our God." Pusey, *in loc.* — Tr.]

as the object of the Gospel are those who heartily confess, and desire to forsake, their sins. By such preaching of lies the judgment is simply hastened. It brings out the contradiction of God's Word with double energy, and prepares for corruption a rushing progress among the other classes.

The result of this course is that not merely the land becomes foreign, but prophecy disappears altogether, the presence of God becomes a dead shadow and his holy abode a stone-heap.

HENGSTENBERG: The particular vices which the prophet names are to be regarded at the same time, and principally, as indices of the whole diseased condition of the people. The severity of his speech, says the prophet to the false prophets, was rather true mildness, since it alone could avert the approaching judgment. Not from want of patience, not from unmercifulness does his God punish, but the fault lay with the sinners who violently drew his judgments upon themselves. The false prophets are to be looked upon as the accomplices of the corrupt nobility, as the bulwark, that is, which they oppose to the true prophecy and to its influence on the people, and their own conscience; as the material power always looks about for such spiritual allies.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

On chap. ii. Several signs that the state of a people is hastening toward judgment and needs amendment.

I. The reign of selfishness.

1. Each one strives and plans for himself alone. Ver. 1 a, b, c.

2. Each one trusts in his own strength. Ver. 1, d.

3. Regard for the restraints of law and morality is done away (ver. 2). Consequent judgment threatened. Vers. 3, 4, 5.

II. Unbelief in the judgment and the consequent impenitence.

1. The sting is taken from the preaching of the judgment, while they find fault with the form instead of attending to the matter of the message. Ver. 6.

2. They lull the conscience with half truths. Ver. 7.

3. They suppress the consciousness of manifest sins and abuses (vers. 8, 9). Consequent judgment threatened. Ver. 10.

III. The corruption of the prophetic office.

1. There are those who sing the slumbering consciences completely into a dream. Ver. 11.

2. These people mislead even honest consciences by clothing their false doctrine in the style of God's Word (Matt. vii. 15). Vers. 12, 13.

Ver. 1 f. No man can serve two masters. He that seeks his own is the slave of self-seeking, and cannot escape from it day or night. Where your treasure is there is your heart also. Coveting is the original sin, and to fulfill the last commandment is a duty as fundamental as to fulfill the first. — Ver. 3 f. As the wicked fastens his thought on wickedness so will God fasten him to the consequences of the wickedness. Not to be able to free one's self from what is once begun, that is the curse of evil. — Ver. 4 f. He who acts as if he had nothing, and is not satisfied with gathering and scraping together, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. — Ver. 6. Many a one doubtless drivels because he loves to drivel; such should take heed lest by their ungentle words they give excuse to the adversaries. He is rightly zealous who cherishes a burning desire that the reproach may cease. — Ver. 7. The Lord is long-suffering; but so much the more shameful is it to abuse his patience. — Ver. 8. If God would enter into judgment with us, He needs not to go back to long past sins; yesterday, the hour just past, convicts thee of thy sin. — Ver. 9. The corruption which thou workest in thy children is an everlasting corruption. — Ver. 10. When man makes this lower world his rest, God will trouble him out of it. — Ver. 11. The "inner mission in a social way" has many dark sides, and is seldom accomplished without a certain sacrifice of the truth, or neglect of it and casting pearls before swine. Avoid even the appearance of evil! — Ver. 12. He who would once give out a perverse sentiment as God's Word, will have little difficulty in finding Biblical expressions; and every one to whom theology is merely a thing of the memory stands in this danger. The test of all preaching is, whether it increases thy earnestness for improvement, let it give thee pain or not. If it lulls thee to sleep, it is false even though made up of Scripture phrases.

CH. B. MICHAELIS: On ver. 1. When one takes his stand on the fact that he has the power, there is abuse of the power.

LUTHER: Ver. 2. The Papists may boast of the donation and beneficences of the Emperor Constantine, and others — charitable foundations, cathedrals, cloisters, rents, and tolls — but when we look at the truth, we must think of all such donation, as the prophet speaks of it, that they have coveted such goods, and have then snatched them for themselves. Not with open violence, but by plainly deceiving men with a false pretense, as if they could by such donation gain access to eternal life.

SCHLIER: On ver. 5. While they think they have become rich through violence, they have rather thereby lost their whole land.

LUTHER: Ver. 7. As to the grand boasts of the Papists, that God has given great promises to his church, I do not deny that the promises may be near at hand. But I do deny that they (the Papists) are the true Christian Church. — Ver. 9. The Greeks said well, one's own hearth is better than gold. For that is the best house in which thou wouldst fain be and reside. To widows and orphans, accordingly, their own houses, however small and humble, are true houses of delight. For there they are at home. This affection the prophet desired to magnify, that he might the more strikingly portray the tyranny of the covetous people.

BURCK: On ver. 7. Injustice against the wives is soon followed by injustice against the children. And this is a reason why dissension between the married couple is to be abominated, because it must occasion inexpressible harm to the education of the children.

STARKE: Ver. 1. The proverb, "Thoughts are duty free," holds good in human courts, it is true, but not before God's judgment. Covetousness is a hard thing, and leaves a man no rest day or night. — Ver. 2. We should earnestly resist the first attacks of the old Adam, that he may not acquire power. — Ver. 3. That there is a law of retribution, is attested not only by Holy Scripture, again and again, but also by sound human reason. — Ver. 4. Those who boldly deride divine admonitions, and make of them a mock, shall in turn become a mock to their enemies. — Ver. 7. The nearer their punishment the more secure, generally, the ungodly become. — Ver. 8. Where mani-

fest hostility, where robbing and stealing prevail, and go unpunished, there the ungodly are near to judgment. It does not follow that all who are called God's people are on this account in favor with Him. — Ver. 9. Whether to remain single or to marry, is optional; by no means is it optional to break up marriage, and drive away one's spouse. As all God's works are glorious and good, so also is matrimony, which God has in many ways adorned and blessed. — Ver. 10. He that will not hear must feel. — Ver. 11. Upright teachers must preach nothing but what God commands them.

Pfaff: Take heed, O soul, to thy thoughts! If thou wakest in the night, on thy bed, let the place serve to engage thee in holy thoughts. — Ver. 4. What avails to lament, when God's judgments are actually receiving accomplishment! Repent in time! — Ver. 5. Woe to those who have no part in the congregation of God's people! They have also no part in God and in the heavenly inheritance. — Ver. 7. It is an idle fancy, that God cannot punish the sinner because He is merciful; would they become subjects of his mercy, why then let them be converted. — Ver. 9. Ye judges, do the widows and orphans no hurt! They should be written on your heart. — Ver. 11. A preacher should with full freedom, but with a mind and spirit like that of God, reprove vice.

Rieger: Here also, as in chap. i. the presentation of the sin and announcement of the penalty are connected together, but with the difference that there corruption of God's service is rebuked, here, rather, violence and injustice in the civil relations of the people. One draws the other after it. — Ver. 1 f. What a temptation it is, to have the power to do what evil spite suggests! What would many a one do if the power of the hand were as great as the boldness of the heart! As it is, however, God judges according to the counsel of the heart, and brings to light what a man has been occupied with even on his bed. — Ver. 7. That is the old and still practiced way of avoiding God's threatenings, namely, that men so readily form conceptions of God, and imagine that it is not to be supposed that God can be angry. Let one learn first of all to understand God from His own sayings. He who hates the light may for a while resort to imaginary comfort, but it cannot help him. —Ver. 8. Public outrages resulting from corruption in the civil order, draw after them many private outrages in unhappy marriages, improper divorces, by which the children especially are permanently corrupted, and the ground is laid for all corruption in all classes. Give us peace on every account and in every way.

Quandt: Ver. 1 ff. Where such is the state of things in a country, there the glory of the people has departed, and there breathes a savor of death unto death, which attracts the eagles. — Ver. 3. The evil which the Lord devises is so named only because to the evil it appears evil, while in truth it is holy and good. — Ver. 5. Since the ungodly men of power have inwardly separated themselves from the congregation of the Lord, neither can they outwardly share in its advantages (Ps. xxxvii. 9). — Ver. 6. At the present day also the office of the preacher of righteousness is made specially difficult by the hypocrites who give forth their own carnality, and cry, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. — Ver. 8. O, that all who do violence to poverty would consider that, while they abuse the poor brethren, they set themselves against the great God in heaven. — Ver. 9. True religion is, to visit the widows and the fatherless in their affliction; the devil's worship, to rob widows and orphans.

On chap. iii. To whom much is given in the kingdom of God, of him God's judgment will require much.

I. The more is given him the greater is his guilt.

1. He cannot excuse himself from want of knowledge. — Ver. 1.

2. Rather is his sin a contradiction to the known commandment. Vers. 2, 9.

3. And as such, aggravated by the design to deafen the conscience, it comes to view practically in a very abominable light, and that

(a.) *In externis* as want of natural affection, and as bare egotism. Ver. 3 c, 10, 11.

(b.) *In internis* as desecration of what is holy. Ver. 5.

II. The greater the guilt the greater also the punishment.

1. The abused word and office loses power with respect, and is as if it were not. Vers. 4 b, 6.

2. It loses also its power with God; He no longer hears, and remains dumb. Vers. 4 a, 7.

3. And all which God does further is to announce and bring on trouble. Vers. 8–12.

Ver. 1 f. When once reverence for God's command is destroyed, with the men in power, sin goes irresistibly toward its final end, like a flame which rests not till all is consumed. But against even the fury of the elements God has set his barrier (Job xxxviii. 11). How a right magistracy should be constituted we learn from Is. xxxii. 2. — The Word of God is not partial, but the Most High is above the heights. Neither should his servants be partial. God values the magistracy not according to its legitimacy, but according to its works. But it may well be that the horrid works of a usurped power should first and most speedily come to an issue (vi. 16). To hold men like beasts for fattening and slaughter, is an abomination in the eyes of God. What held good in the O. T. within the nation of Israel, holds good of mankind in the N. T., and with a N. T. application the word of the prophet is true of slavery. Yet not even the prophet preaches revolution, but delivers his testimony, and sets home God's judgment. — Ver. 5. A servant of God, in his judgment on men, and his conduct towards them, should be influenced by no possible tokens of love toward himself personally. — Ver. 6. In hours of drought we ought to prove ourselves, whether we are not ourselves to blame through deficient joyfulness and devotion in the service of God. — Ver. 8. The human virtues also grow only out of the fullness of the Spirit of God, which a servant of God in his office needs. — Ver. 9. To make the straight crooked and to brand right as wrong — who does not shudder at the sin? And yet this is the bosom sin of these our highly cultivated times; scarcely one has not a part in it: it is the necessary result of all partisanship (Eccles. vii. 29). — Ver. 10. Whoever builds with gold from extortion and usury builds with blood (1 John iv. 15). — Ver. 11. What profits all the knocking at the outward form of the church, when the fact proves that God by his Spirit is not there but has left it? In such a case the breaking up of the form also is only a question of time. The church is only a result of labor spent on the kingdom of God; labor spent on the church is in itself of no profit, as a schoolmaster is not the carpenter who builds the school-house, nor the public officer who brings up the children, but he who forms their

souls. — Ver. 12. Better for a land to be quite uncultivated than cultivated in the service of sin.

LUTHER: On ver. 1. As the person of the magistracy, because they are in office, is public and common, so their sins and transgressions also are public, and much more offensive than those of ordinary citizens, not only on account of the scandal, from the fact that the common herd are any how inclined to imitate the sins of the great lords, but also because the magistracy thus become more slack to blame and punish in the lower orders those iniquities which they find and feel in themselves.

CH. B. MICHAELIS: Ver. 2. When the prefect advised Tiberius to lay heavy burdens on the provinces, he wrote, A good shepherd shears the sheep, but does not flay them.

TARNOV: Ver. 3. David would not drink the water which his attendants had procured for him at the hazard of their lives (2 Sam. xxiii. 16); ought there to be then, among Christian men, any so bad that by them the blood of their dependents is drunk, and in a moment what those have contributed drop by drop?

CH. B. MICHAELIS: Ver. 4. By this the promise is not broken that God will hear all that call upon Him. Here such are meant as wickedly call upon Him (James iv. 3), not in truth (Ps. cxlv. 18) but hypocritically, and merely in the anguish of punishment (Prov. i. 28), without repentance and faith (Is. i. 15); as Esau wept (Gen. xxvii. 34), and as the lost lament (Wisd. v. 3).

TARNOV: On ver. 8. He speaks of the gift which God has given him, not to boast of it, but compelled, as Paul (2 Cor. x. 11 ff.).

LUTHER: On ver. 10. He condemns not priests and prophets because they take reward and money, for the pious and God-fearing preachers of the Word are worthy of their hire, but because they abuse their office to their own gratification, and for the sake of gain, and see through the finger when the people sin, whom they should justly have punished.

HENGSTENBERG: On ver. 13. Righteousness builds up because it brings God's protection and blessing; unrighteousness tears down because it brings God's curse.

STARKE: On ver. 1. Those are dangerous preachers who reprove only the crowd, that they may flatter the lords. Magistrates should of necessity know justice, because only thus can they speak what is just. — Ver. 2. Love of evil is always connected with hatred toward the good, although men commonly, in practicing the evil, keep up a semblance of love for the good. — Ver. 5. It is indeed a great hardship to live under a tyrannical government, but still more dangerous is it to be supplied with false and ungodly teachers, for they preach the people not only out of the land but into hell. That is a certain sign of an antichristian disposition, which has always manifested itself as soon as the truth has arisen here or there in the world: the devil has at once roused up revilers, who attacked the witnesses for the truth, and accused them of horrible crimes. So it is still, and so it will remain to the last day. — Ver. 6. He who loves the light of divine truth walks also in the light of blessedness (Job xxii. 28); but he who chooses darkness rather than light walks also in the darkness of error and falsehood, and does the deeds of darkness. — Ver. 7. When the day of divine vengeance comes, the teachers of error will not be overlooked. — Ver. 8. Here we perceive the distinction between a false and a true prophet, between a converted and an unconverted teacher, and the different ground, nature, and object of their office. There is with the true man, spirit, power, light, self-denial, wise temperance, pure, uncorrupted delivery of God's plan of salvation; and with the false, envy, imagination, self love which puffs up, personal gain, respect of persons, deception of the fancy, etc., etc. — Ver. 10. By tyranny and injustice neither the church of God is built nor the kingdom of a prince established.

PFAFF: Ver. 1. We have here the condition of the magistracy. God has established this to dispense right and justice, to further the public good, to be an example of virtue to the people, and surely it should not take this away from the people by injustice and tyranny. — Ver. 4. Repentance which comes to us from an experience of the punishment deceives not before God. — Ver. 5. Behold the criterion of a false and ungodly teacher. He is one who for his own enjoyment comforts the ungodly in their sins, who looks only for a good revenue and reward, who preaches to please men, who calumniates the real servants of God that speak the truth, who rebukes only when his gains are disturbed. — Ver. 12. The more secure men are, the heavier are the judgments of God which come upon them.

RIEGER: Ver. 1. God has given to every class in the world both its external advantages and its tendency and adaptation to usefulness. Thus even the great ones in the world should find in their more complete culture, understanding and discernment, an impulse to become acquainted with the rights which God has established. If then in the world they hate good, it is not only for themselves a sorry proof that they are children of the devil, but also opens the way for the eternal destruction of others, because much good is nipped in its blossom by the hate, or at least suspicion, which the great direct against it. The more enjoyment and advantage one can procure from his unrighteousness, the less readily does one give it up. — Ver. 4. As little as the violent are generally disposed to cry to the Lord, there still come occasions even to them, as war, etc., when their cries are awakened. As the promise that his prayer shall be heard is the most consoling to wretched man, so is the threat of having to hear the judge the most dreadful. Let him who thus turns away the sufferer, who should have had the benefit of his office, hides his face from him, refuses him an interview, — let such an one be careful what he does. — Ver. 5 f. The times when, in the earthly rule things go sadly and in disorder, commonly bring also great danger of temptation upon the church. — Ver. 2 f. Misbelief often does as much mischief in the land as unbelief. Amid increasing corruption of life, to trust to purity of doctrine alone, and think one's self on this account far from the evil day, is misbelief. True, the kingdom of God cannot come to a stand, but meanwhile it may be taken from us and given to others.

QUANDT: Ver. 1. Those are the right court preachers who are not restrained by the star on the breast from inquiring whether the heavenly morning star shines also in the breast (*Urlsperger*). — Ver. 3. There are people who spend money enough on a single meal to support a teacher or a missionary for a considerable time. — Ver. 6. Only a sudden thought of the dark eternity can now fill with anguish the soul which rejoices in sin. — Ver 7. When once the world perceive that they are deceived, they turn with scorn from their own prophets. — Ver. 8. Inward certainty, and having the

soul established in God, is the best call for a preacher. — Ver. 12. The times are become still worse before the judgment came (Is. xxvi. 18).

BREMER: Sermon on vers. 1–4. Warning to the judges. (1.) Their responsibility as possessors of knowledge. (2.) Their sin: violation of duty, and self-seeking. (3.) Their punishment. — Synodal sermon on vers. 5–8. Warning to the heralds of God's Word. (1.) Their ideal character (ver. 8). (2.) Their danger of darkening God's Word through self-seeking, in that either they for personal advantage preach what the ears of people lust after, or brand their personal enemies as God's enemies. (3.) The aggravation of their sin; desecration of the Word; confusion of God's congregation. (4.) Their punishment; they lose the capacity to discern God's Word, and speak to the disgust of others and of themselves. Sermon on vers. 11, 12. False confidence in God. (1.) *Its ground*, an outward temple — sacraments. (2.) *Its danger*, disregard of the distant future, indifference, indulgence given to the natural man. (3.) *Its end.* Fate of the Jewish state; the holy city becomes as the world, and shares the fate of the world. So likewise we. If we forsake God He will forsake us.

[PUSEY: Chap. ii. 1. *Upon their beds*, which ought to be the place of holy thought, and of communing with their own hearts and with God. Stillness must be filled with thought, good or bad; if not with good, then with bad. The chamber, if not the sanctuary of holy thoughts, is filled with unholy purposes and imaginations. — Ver. 6. *Shall not depart.* It hath not now first to come. It is not some new thing to be avoided, turned aside. The sinner has but to remain as he is; the shame encompasseth him already, and only *departeth* not. The *wrath of God* is already upon him, and *abideth on him*. — Ver. 13. So then, Christians, following Him, the captain of their salvation, strengthened by his grace, must burst the bars of the flesh and of the world, the bonds and chains of evil passions and habits, force themselves through the narrow way and narrow gate, do violence to themselves, *endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.* The title of our Lord, *the breaker-through*, and the saying, *they break through*, together express the same as the New Testament doth, in regard to our being partakers of the sufferings of Christ. — Chap. iii. 6. The prayer is never too late, until judgment comes; the day of grace is over when the time of judgment has arrived. They shall cry unto the Lord, and shall not be heard, because they too did not hear those who asked them, and the Lord shall turn his face from them, because they too turned their face from those who prayed to them. O, what will that turning away of the face be, on which hangs eternity! — TR.]

THIRD DISCOURSE.

CHAPTERS IV. AND V.

CHAP IV. 1 And it shall be in the last days,
That the mountain of the house of Jehovah
Shall be established on the top of the mountains;
And it shall be exalted above the hills:
And peoples shall flow unto it.
2 And many nations shall go,
And shall say: Come ye,
And let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah,
And to the house of the God of Jacob;
That he may teach us of his ways,
And we walk in his paths.
For out of Zion shall go forth law,
And the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem,
3 And he shall judge between many peoples,
And decide for strong nations, to a great distance;
And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
And their spears into pruning-knives.
They shall not lift up sword, nation against nation,
Nor shall they learn war any more.
4 And they will sit, each one under his vine,
And under his fig tree,
And none shall terrify;
For the mouth of Jehovah of hosts hath spoken,
5 For all the peoples walk,
Each in the name of his God;
And we will walk in the name of Jehovah,
Our God for ever and ever.

6 In that day, whispers Jehovah,
I will gather her that is lame,
And her that is dispersed will I collect together,
And whom I have afflicted;
7 And will set the lame one for a remnant,
And the far removed for a strong nation;
And Jehovah shall reign over them in Mount Zion,
Henceforth and forever.
8 And thou, tower of the flock,
Ophel, daughter of Zion, to thee shall approach,
And come, the former dominion,
A kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem.[2]

9 Now why dost thou cry out aloud?
Is there no king in thee?
Has thy counsellor perished,
That pangs have seized thee as the travailing woman?
10 Writhe, and bring forth,
Daughter of Zion, as the travailing woman!
For now thou must go forth out of the city,
And dwell in the field,
And come unto Babylon.
There shalt thou be redeemed,
There shall Jehovah deliver thee,
Out of the hand of thy enemies.
11 And now are gathered against thee
Many nations,
That say: Let her be defiled,
And let our eye gaze upon Zion!
12 But they know not
The thoughts of Jehovah,
And understand not his counsel;
That he collects them as sheaves into the threshing-floor.
13 Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion!
For thy horn will I make iron,
And thy hoofs will I make brass,
And thou shalt beat in pieces many nations,
And I will devote[3] to Jehovah their gain,
And their treasure to the Lord of all the earth.
14 (Ch. V. 1.[1]) Now gather thyself in troops, thou daughter of troops;
They have set a siege against us;
With a staff they smite on the cheek
The judge of Israel.

CHAP. V. 2. (1) And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah —
Small to be among the thousands of Judah, —
From thee shall come forth for me
He that is to be ruler in Israel;
Whose goings forth are from of old,
From the days of eternity.
3 (2) Therefore will he give them up,
Until the time when she that travaileth hath borne;
And the residue of his brethren shall return
To the sons of Israel,
4 (3) And he shall stand and feed,
In the strength of Jehovah,
In the majesty of the name of Jehovah, his God;

1 [Ch. v. 1 of the Eng. vers is ch. iv. 14 of the Hebrew Bible. — Tr.]

And they shall dwell; for now shall he be great
Unto the ends of the earth,
5 (4) And he will be peace;
Asshur, when he cometh into our land,
And when he treadeth upon our castles,
Then will we set up against him
Seven herdsmen,
And eight anointed of men;
6 (5) And they shall pasture the land of Asshur with the sword,
And the land of Nimrod in her gates:
And he will deliver from Asshur,
When he cometh into our land,
And when he treadeth on our borders.
7 (6) And the remnant of Jacob shall be
In the midst of many peoples,
As the dew from Jehovah,
As rain upon the grass,
Which tarrieth not for man,
Nor waiteth for the sons of men.
8 (7) And the remnant of Jacob shall be
Among the nations, in the midst of many peoples,
As a lion among the beasts of the forest,
As a young lion among the flocks of sheep,
Which, if he pass through, treadeth down,
9 (8) High be thy hand over those that distress thee,
And let all thy enemies be cut off!

10 (9) And it will be in that day, whispers Jehovah,
That I will cut off thy horses from the midst of thee,
And will destroy thy chariots;
11 (10) And I will cut off the cities of thy land,
And pull down all thy fortresses;
12 (11) And I will cut off incantations out of thy hand,
And sorcerers thou shalt not have;
13 (12) And I will cut off thy carved images,
And thy statues out of the midst of thee,
And thou shalt no more worship the work of thy hands;
14 (13) And I will tear down thy Asherahs, out of the midst of thee,
And lay prostrate thy cities;
15 (14) And will in anger and fury execute vengeance
On the nations who have not heard.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ch. IV. 1. Kleinert and Pusey: at the end of the days; but אחרית means, properly, the "latter part," "end" in that sense. — Tr.]

[2 Ver. 8. The only considerable objection to the translation above, regarded merely as a translation, is that it makes too little account of the *Athnach*; but this pause seems here no more than a rhetorical suspension of the construction, and the repetition of the verb (not the same verb) "approach," "come" (and with change of tense), makes no tautology, but only "raises the soul to think of the greatness of that which should come." (Pusey.) This view appears to be favored also by the *Rebhia* in the second member, and is that adopted by Dr. Pusey, except that he treats בת צ ון as a genitive, not appositive, and translates "Ophel, of the daughter of Zion." This is an allowable alternative. On Ophel. *vid*. Smith's *Dict. of the Bib.*, Am. Ed.

Zunz's version reads: "And thou flock-tower, the height of the daughter of Zion will come to thee," etc., which makes a separate subject for each verb, and allows a more complete division at the *Athnach*; but it labors under the equally serious difficulty of an irregular concord between עפל and תאתה, and keeps not quite so close to the order of the Hebrew.

Kleinert's translation, given in the exeget. notes, sacrifices the accent in making עפל as a genitive, limit the two preceding words as a compound term; but his interpretation deserves very careful consideration. — Tr.]

[3 Ver. 13. On חרם, *vid*. Lange on Josh. ii. 10. — Tr.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This discourse also falls into two main portions, chapters iv. and v., the close connection of which is shown by their contents and arrangement. The leading thought common to both is, that the deliverance and glorification of Israel is certain to come, because the promise cannot be broken, while yet it will come only through grievous afflictions, and after the deepest humiliation. In respect to the plan, ch. iv. begins, in an immediate antithesis to the threatening which had preceded, —

a. Vers. 1–8. With a description of the future glory of the kingdom of God in Israel, having Jerusalem for its central point (eight verses with forty members), and then passes, —

b. Vers. 9–14. (Six verses with thirty members), to the description of the heavy affliction, distress, and banishment of the people, which must come before their salvation.

Parallel to this, ch. v. begins: —

a. Vers. 1–8. By describing the person and work of the Messiah, with whom that glorification must arrive (eight verses and forty members), and proceeds, —

b. (Six verses with fifteen members), to the threatening which, from the nature of the case, is pronounced with this promise upon all ungodly practices in Israel.

There is nothing in the historical situation to oblige us to assume a chronological advance from the preceding discourse. For, although in ch. iv. 9 ff. the picture of the affliction appears to be drawn into the immediate present, still it is prophetically given throughout, and we easily perceive that the prophet speaks not out of a state of facts corporeally visible, but from prophetic intuition.

Chap. iv. vers. 1–8. *The future kingdom of God in Jerusalem, the centre of the world.* **And it will come to pass** — והיה, the usual form by which the discourse is transferred to the future, so that we have to recognize an antithesis to the conclusion of the preceding chapter, without any immediate progress, but with a new flight of the discourse (Hos. ii. 1; Joel iii. 1). **At the end of the days**, therefore not soon, as those false prophets supposed (ii. 12 f.), but only in the final completion of salvation. The phrase באחרית הימים (Targ. בְּסוֹף יוֹמַיָּא, "at the end of the days," LXX. ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις), is the opposite to בְּרֵאשִׁית (Gen. i. 1), and thus denotes in the prophets (Hos. iii. 5; Joel iii. 1; Ezek. xxxviii. 16, cf. Deut. iv. 30), the completion of the world in contrast to its creation, the aim of all ages, the last time, with which closes the historical development in which the prophet stands and in the light of which he tests the present time and foretells the future — the Messianic time. Then **shall the mountain of the house of Jehovah,** which represents, according to the connection, the whole elevated, (i. 5), holy city, including Zion, called in the Messianic Ps. lxxxvii. also a foundation of God on the holy mountains; — thus in gaining a universal character prophecy gives, instead of the localities named in connection with the destruction (iii. 12), etc., the ideal conception of Jerusalem (cf. the Doctrinal and Ethical below), — **be established,** not on the top of the mountains (Hengstenberg, Keil) for in this sense נכון is construed with על (Judg. xvi. 26), and the conception could not be carried out, but **as the head of the mountains** (בְּ predicative as 1 Chron. xii. 18; Ps. xxxv. 2; Ex. vi. 3; ראש metaphorically for "the first, most eminent," as 1 Chron. xii. 18. Thus the question is already answered, whether the exaltation is to be understood as physical (Hofm., Drechsl.) or moral (Casp., Hengstenb.). The ideal Zion will be elevated above all else in the world (Is. ii. 17; 2 Cor. x. 5). The apocalyptic style of directly designating the kingdoms of the world by mountains (Rev. xvii. 9), would suit well here, but cannot be supported for the O. T., by the passages adduced by Hengstenberg. At the bottom of the phrase lies the image presented in Ps. lxviii. 17, where the advantage which Zion enjoys as the dwelling-place of God is indicated by the envy with which the higher mountains look upon it. Before God, not the lofty but the low has value (cf. v. 1). נכון stands emphatically as the expression which, from the ancient promise 2 Sam. vii. 16, 26, has become the usual one, for the unchangeable establishment of anything by Almighty God, who can build firmly even on the floods of waters (Ps. xxiv. 2, cf. xciii. 2). Parallel to this the following member says: **and it** (Zion) **shall be exalted above the hills** (cf. Ezek. xvii. 22 f.). The ideal significance of both sentences is proved by the parallel third member; **and the peoples shall flow unto it,**[1] seeing it as it were from afar; not by constraint, but willingly. It lies in the universal character of the prophecy, that the word "peoples" here should not, as in i. 2, be the tribes of Israel, but the nations of the world, and accordingly, in the second verse, גוים immediately takes its place (cf. Is. ii. 2).

Ver. 2. **And many nations shall go,** רַבִּים, like the N. T. οἱ πολλοί, *e. g.* Matt. xxvi. 28; not in reference to those who exclude themselves, but to the great number of those who come (cf. Is. ii. 2, כל). A powerful movement will go through the heathen world, so that their own feeling will turn them all toward Zion (Zech. viii. 20. ff.), **and shall say** to each other **Come ye! and let us go up** (for a mountain is thought of) **to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob,** no more to our deceitful idols from one land to the other (Deut. xxx. 11 ff.); **that he may teach us** (imperf. instead of perf. conv. because the connection is final) **concerning his ways,** מִן περί, as Is. xlvii. 13),[2] **that we may walk in his paths.** God teaches sinners the path in which they should go. (Ps. xxv. 8, 12). **For out of Zion shall go forth direction, and the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem.** The Thorah rests immediately on the preceding יוֹרֵה, and is, therefore, not to be understood (with Hengstenberg) as the Mosaic law strictly, but in its proper, more comprehensive sense, "instruction," as also the explanatory "word of Jehovah," in the parallel member, is not at all the word already written merely, but one that is to be

1 [Literally, "upon" it, as though the stream would overflow the mountain. "It is a miracle, if waters ascend from a valley and flow to a mountain. So it is a miracle that earthly nations should ascend to the church, whose doctrine and life are lofty, arduous, sublime." Lap. in Pusey in loc. — Tr.]

2 [Dr. Pusey understands the מִן partitively, and happily applies the expression to the infinite variety and degrees of understanding to which individual saints have attained, concerning God, and of experience of his grace. "They do not go to God because they know Him, but *that* they may know Him." — Tr.]

sounded out anew.[1] Theodoret: "The word of the gospel, beginning as from a fountain, runs out through the whole inhabited world," Jerusalem, accordingly, is considered in that time of salvation, not as the seat of culture, but as the source of the living revelation of the Lord.

Ver. 3. **And He will judge between many peoples.** War comes from the fact that men would procure justice for themselves, and so exercise violence (cf. Gen. iv. 23; Rom. xii. 19); the new kingdom, however, will be (Is. ix. 11) a kingdom of peace; God will discharge the duty of a judge. Compare, concerning the spread of such intimations of a reign of peace, in the heathen world, about the time of Christ, Virgil, *Eccl.* iv.; Ovid, *Fast.*, i. 699; Martial, xiv. 34. **And will correct mighty nations,** "who were hitherto for the most part inclined of their own will to grasp the sword." Hengst., cf. Is. liii. 12. **Far away** into the remote distance: accordingly, the flowing up in vers. 1 and 2, is a spiritual movement which is compatible with their externally remaining at home. Then **they will beat their swords,** which were still drawn against God's kingdom (Joel iv. 10), **into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks,** *i. e.*, into the implements of peace. **For they will not lift up the sword nation against nation, they will not learn war any more;** Jehovah teaches them, and his instruction is peace.[2] **But they shall dwell, each one under his vine and under his fig tree,**[3] images of undisturbed peace in Solomon's time (1 K. v. 5; Zech. iii. 10). "Our evening meal," says the missionary, R. Schulz (*Leitungen des Hochsten*, v. 285), "we enjoyed" (in Beit Jibrin not far from Akko) "under a great grape-vine, whose stem was about a foot and a half in circumference, while it stretched upward to the height of thirty feet. It covered with its branches and side-canes a cottage of more than thirty feet in length and breadth. The clusters of such a vine weigh from ten to twelve pounds. They cut them off, lay them on a table,

1 [He speaks of it as *law* simply, not *the* Jewish *law* as such, but a rule of life from God. Man's better nature is ill at ease, being out of harmony with God. It cannot be otherwise. Having been made in His likeness, it must be distressed by its unlikeness; having been made by Him for Himself, it must be restless without Him. What they indistinctly longed for, what drew them, was the hope to be conformed by Him to Him. The sight of superhuman holiness, life, love, endurance, ever won and wins those without to the gospel or the church."— Pusey.]

2 These three verses are found again in Is. ii. 2-4, almost word for word. It is disputed which of the two prophets borrowed them from the other. At first view the reference of them to our author seems to be favored by the obvious circumstance that they stand in a vital and complementary connection, are essential to the understanding of what follows, and through the antithesis to the immediately preceding context, have an appropriate and truly constructive position (cf. ii. 12 with iii. 1 and iv. 14 with v. 1). In Isaiah, on the other hand, the three verses stand entirely apart at the head of a long discourse, whose subsequent parts are easily intelligible without them, and have only the interior connection with them that Isaiah shows: "So it ought to be and might have been, but how unworthy are ye now, that such salvation should come." It is in this view evident that Isaiah in that passage quotes from some source, and granting this, it seems most obvious that he quotes from Micah. But now we learn from Jeremiah xxvi. 18 f. that Micah published his prophesies (cf. the Introd.) under king Hezekiah. And although one might restrict this statement to that which was immediately connected with the verse of Micah (iii. 12) there cited, and belonging to the same time, still, on this principle chaps. i., vi., ii., possibly, at the most, could be assigned to an earlier date of composition, but precisely for the series of discourses, chaps. ii.-v., would Jeremiah's statement remain decisive. But Isaiah's discourse, ch. ii., belongs not to the time of Hezekiah, but at the latest, to that of Ahaz, probably to that of Jotham, and was composed, accordingly, before Micah ii.-v. Besides, the assumption (otherwise improbable) that Micah has presented us in our book with a total collection of the revelation, communicated by him at different times, does not solve the enigma. For thus the verbal identity of the citation in Isaiah, made from the oral discourse, with the written expression of Micah remains unexplained. This latter must have lain before Isaiah, on the supposition that he was the borrower from our prophet.

Thus commentators have been led to assume that both prophets made use of one and the same earlier prophet (Hitzig: Joel), whose writing has been lost. But how can this be proved, especially since it stands written expressly over those verses in Isaiah, "The word of Jehovah," which appears to do away utterly with such, and with every assumption of borrowing? I can understand this caption, which, besides, would be altogether superfluous, only by regarding it as belonging to the discourse itself of Isaiah, not, therefore as a title, but as an integral beginning of the discourse itself. I should accordingly paraphrase Is. ii 1-5 in this way: Isaiah once spoke the familiar word (הַדָּבָר), etc. (vers. 2-4); but now (ver. 5) it must be spoken thus (vers. 5 ff., cf. Is. xvi. 13. ff.). Isaiah should thus before the whole discourse in ch. ii. have uttered the vers. 2 ff. as an independent prophecy, which he now repeats under altered circumstances to show how it is that it cannot be fulfilled. Isaiah quotes, accordingly, from himself. On the other side, however, Micah also has taken up again that old promise of his respected colleague, which might very naturally have made a strong impression among the people, in order, not antithetically but expansively to carry it forward, and to attach thereto his own new revelations. In a similar manner Jeremiah also (*vid* Introd. to Obad.) has reproduced and modified older predictions. [The very general view of commentators is that Isaiah ("not after the reign of Jotham," Pusey) borrowed these verses from our prophet. See Dr. Pusey's very strong judgment, *Introd. to the Proph. Micah*, p. 289 f.—Tr.]

3 [Pusey finds the fulfillment of this enchanting prophecy of "Peace on Earth" "(1) In the character of the Gospel. (2) The prophecy has been fulfilled within and without, among individuals or bodies of men, in body or mind, in temper or indeed, as far as the Gospel has prevailed." Alas! to how small an extent then, has the Gospel prevailed! True, the coming of Christ to the earth was remarkably, providentially coincident with a universal peace, the second which had been experienced throughout the Roman dominion since the reign of Numa (Livy, i. 19). Very impressive also are the testimonies of the early Christian writers to the change which the world had even then undergone, through the influence of Christianity, in respect to the frivolousness, the frequency, barbarity, rage, and destructiveness of wars. Indeed, the expressed sentiments and the actual practice of Christians, at times, in former centuries, might well have encouraged the hope that ere now war would be remembered throughout Christendom only as the nightmare of a darkness forever past. But what is our feeling when those of us who are older retrace the bloody history of Christendom throughout our own lifetime! What, when we see the foremost nations of the world, and those most clearly enlightened by the rays of the Gospel, still most conspicuously distinguished above the heathen precisely in respect to the magnitude, the costliness, the scientific perfection, and the destructive efficiency, surpassing all ancient example, of their apparatus for mutual slaughter and devastation! It is but partial consolation to the Christian heart, that in all the wars which have stained the record of our century, one of the parties *may* have been in the right; because, even so, the other party, Christians also, were necessarily wrong. Still, it is true that the spirit of peace, "averse from war," is the spirit of individual Christian hearts; and among the thousand painful evils due in our time to the sectarian division, discrepancy, belligerency of Christians, without any authoritative unity of organization, or possibility of expressing freely their common thought and will, there is none more painful, humiliating, disastrous, than their incapacity to combine, and so make efficacious, their hatred of war. — Tr.]

sit around and eat as much as each one desires." Fig trees of equal luxuriance were seen by the same traveller between Arimathea and Jerusalem. **Without a disturber,** as is promised, Lev. xxvi. 6; **for the mouth of Jehovah of Sabaoth has spoken,** and before Him must all the world be dumb (Hab. ii. 10; Zeph. i 7), just because He the Lord of hosts is strong and mighty in battle (Ps. xxiv. 10, 8).

Ver. 5. In Him lies the guaranty for the final salvation of Israel: **For all the peoples go hence each in the name of his God, but we walk in the name of Jehovah, our God, forever and ever.** The name of the God of Israel is Jehovah, that is, the eternally living and forever unchangeable one; and this name describes his being (Ex. iii. 14). He, therefore, who walks in this name, in the power of this name, will eternally walk (Ps. liii. 25 ff.; John xvii. 21 ff.). The true sense of the first half of the verse results from the antithesis, that mere "going," in contrast with "going eternally," has the incidental signification of "passing away" (Job xix. 10; xiv. 20). It is the opposition of transience to permanence, inferred from the union (solidarity) in which the worshipper stands with the object of his devotion: the idols are perishable, because made of perishable materials; God is eternal, and therefore, etc. Compare on the whole thought, Is. xlv. 16 f. Bolder yet would appear the prophetic conception if we were to refer the final words עולם ועד to both verbs, and thus find the promise expressed that, in the time of salvation, every people would, under the name of its God, adore the true God and walk with Him eternally. The view might be supported by Ps. xcvii. 9, 7, where a time is promised in which the gods should bow before God, and by Ps. lxxxii., where it said that the gods like men will pass away, and Jehovah will enter into their inheritance. Still the form, in which it would appear here in Micah, transcends perhaps the horizon of the O. T. ["To walk in the name," etc., may probably mean "to walk consistently with the character and will," etc. — Tr.]

Ver. 6. **In that day, saith Jehovah, will I gather.** He will gather, but not immediately now, as they allow themselves to be persuaded (ch. ii. 12), but in the last days (ver. 1), and not the population of Zion as it is, but **her that halteth,** *i. e.*, who has been pitifully treated, **and her that is cast off will I collect, and her whom I have afflicted.** As such, therefore not till after many hard blows, after abuse and rejection (cf. ver. 10), will the Lord be gracious again to the daughter of Zion, the population of Judah. The assumption of Quistorp and Burck, that by "the lame" and "the dispersed," the kingdom of Samaria was meant, never deserved refutation.

Ver. 7. **And will set the lame for a remnant,** will regard and treat them as the remnant to whom the promise applies (cf. on ii. 12); **and the dispersed** (cf. Am. v. 27) those who have been thrust into exile, **for a strong nation. And Jehovah is king in mount Zion from now on unto eternity** (cf. Obad. 21). The "now" is spoken of the time of the fulfillment; from that point onward at which God shall establish his universal dominion (Ps. xciii.); not as if this dominion did not exist also now, but now it is not perceived. Instead of the Messiah of David, Micah names God Himself as ruler in the kingdom of the future: "*Non ut excludat regnum illud Davidis* (cf. v. 1), *sed ut ostendat Deum palam facturum se auctorem illius regni esse, immo se ipsum tenere totam potentiam.*" (Calvin.)

Ver. 8. **And thou, flock-tower of Ophel, the daughter of Zion will come to thee. Yea there is to be** (*zukünftig ist*) **the former dominion, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.** Commentators connect the words of the first clause differently: "thou tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion, to thee will arrive and come," etc. But this is condemned by the tautology, unavoidable in this view of באה and תאתה. Accordingly, the Masoretes also close the sentence by the Athnach under תאתה, and our construction, which is found also in the LXX., is to be thought of as the right one. As regards the sense, the connection shows that there must be a reference in the tower of the flock to the royal house of David; for as vers. 1–7, are antithetically related to iii. 12, inasmuch as the destruction of the temple hill is immediately followed by the promise of the consecration of it to be the centre of God's eternal kingdom, so our verse 8 forms the text for the following symmetrical discourse vers. 9–15, of which the theme is the near approaching ruin of the kingdom. Now there is a tower of David mentioned in Cant. iv. 4, which is described as a majestic structure, adorned with trophies. On the other side, Nehemiah (iii. 25) speaks of a tower which rose above the king's castle, and therefore must have stood on Mount Zion. Both are explained by Keil and Hengstenberg as identical each with the other, and both with the tower of the flock in our passage. But, first, it is very doubtful whether those two towers are identical. The tower of David (Cant. iv. 4) can just as well be identical with the tower mentioned Neh. iii. 11, or iii. 28. There were many towers in Jerusalem, and any one which David had built might be called the tower of David; but again, granting that identity, the identity of the tower of David on Zion with the tower of the flock, is still more questionable, for why in that case should not this latter be called here also the tower of David. Finally, the tower is called by Micah expressly the tower of Ophel, not the tower of Zion. But Ophel is not Mount Zion, but the steep spur on the south of the temple mountain.[1]

To arrive at an understanding of our passage, we must turn to another of its connections. The designation "tower of the flock" (Migdal-edar). occurs also in Gen. xxxv. 16 ff. We there read that as Jacob went from Bethel to Bethlehem, Rachel his wife died in her confinement, and that he then pitched his tent beyond Migdal-edar. There must, accordingly, have been a tower not far from Jerusalem, in the open field, such as were common in antiquity, to afford refuge to the inhabitants of the flat country in times of hostile invasion. Cf. Faber, *Archäologie*, 192 ff. German antiquity also is familiar with these towers visible from afar, in the open fields; in the Alexander-legend of Parson Lamprecht, they appear under the name of "*Bergfrieden*," with which is connected the German-French name *belfroys, beffrois.* And that Micah has this tower of the flock in mind is unquestionable, for, in the first place, thus only can we explain the connection of ideas, by virtue of which (ver. 9 ff.) the pangs of the woman in child-birth follow in a manner parallel to the connection of the tower of the flock with the pangs of Rachel (Gen. xxxv.). And secondly, the mention of the name Ephrata (v. 1), in connection with Bethlehem, is a reminiscence of Gen. xxxv. 16.

1 [On Ophel, vid. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. and Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 490. — Tr.]

If now we inquire more precisely after the position of this tower of the flock, we may infer with great probability from the two passages combined, that it lay within the limits of the subsequent city of Jerusalem. For here it is called the mount of Ophel, and Ophel lay in Jerusalem; there we read that it lay on the way from Bethel to Bethlehem, and within the inconsiderable distance which there was (כִּבְרָה, ver. 16) between the place where Rachel died and Bethlehem. Now Jerusalem lies on this road, twelve Roman miles from Bethel, and six Roman miles from Bethlehem. We may add, that from 1 Sam. x. 2, it must be inferred that Rachel's grave lay still north of Jerusalem; that Jacob, therefore, after her death, on his way further to Bethlehem, must have passed the site of Jerusalem; but that Salem, the residence of Melchisedek, did not include the temple-mountain, is evident, since Abraham offered Isaac on this mountain without coming in contact with Melchisedek. On the other hand, that the temple mountain, particularly, was well suited for a fortification of the kind above described, is obvious from the fact that Hyrcanus also and Herod found it altogether convenient to be the site of a strong tower (Joseph., *Ant.*, xviii. 6), and the south point, Ophel, especially, looked far out into the land, and was on three sides almost inaccessible. David may, therefore, have found this old tower on Ophel, and fortified it anew. For that he established such strong towers outside of Zion, also, is shown by the name of the tower, Neh. iii. 11. Further, Is. xxxii. 14 indicates that beside the palace on Zion (Armon), there stood a stronghold, and superfluously, Neh. iii. 27, directly proves that Ophel was fortified, for a wall of Ophel is there spoken of.

That Micah now names this Flock-tower, in particular, as an emblem of the kingdom of David, is not because the establishment of a shepherd relation between God and his people is in question (Hengstenberg); for it is here said that the dominion shall come to the Flock-tower, not to God; but it rests on historical agreements and parallels. The Flock-tower is directly a symbol of the royal house of David, as having come from the flock. Once already has Zion turned to the flock, to gain her king from thence; and so will she a second time, in the day of salvation, turn to the dominion which springs from the flock; the people turn to Jerusalem, Jerusalem to the heir of David. — עַד denotes either the place up to which one comes, or the object toward which one turns. The first signification does not suit here; and we must therefore, as in Deut. iv. 30, xxx. 2; Is. ix. 12, have recourse to the second. — There thus lies at the bottom here, also, by implication, as in the two preceding verses, the conception of an unhappy interval, during which the kingdom of David is fallen down; and the thought is similar to that in Am. ix. 11. This is expressed still more clearly by the following member: **there comes the ancient dominion, the kingdom for the daughter of Jerusalem.** — לְ to designate the dominion over any one, as Num. xxii. 4. — At the same time there runs parallel that other reference to Rachel, namely, that for the Jewish community this progress to salvation, to the Flock-tower, is a dangerous one: the Messiah is born amid deadly birth-pangs. With this thought, which is fully developed, ch. v. 1 ff., the following section connects itself.

Vers. 9–14. In striking contrast to the rapturous vision of future splendor, appears *the suffering which must first be endured.* As in the preceding ver. 7 (cf. Ps. xxxv. 15, 18), so here ver. 11 looks back to Ps. xxxv. (vers. 15, 16). **Now why dost thou cry aloud?** In spirit the prophet perceives the cry which the daughter of Jerusalem must raise at the approach of the Assyrian (Is. xxii. 3 ff., cf. x. 30). The *nomen actionis* stands as a strengthening object (Gesen., § 138, 1, 3). **Is there no king in thee? Or has thy counsellor perished, that pangs have seized thee as the travailing woman in travail?** The affliction will consist in the fact that the kingdom goes straightway to ruin, and Zion is thereby thrown into the deepest lamentation. "The loss of the king was much more painful for Israel than for any other people, because so many glorious promises were connected with the kingdom. The king was the visible representative of the divine favor, and his removal a sign of God's wrath, and a nullification of all the blessings promised to the people in him." Keil. "Counsellor" is an explanatory synonym for king (Is. ix. 5). What here is directly a figure becomes, as v. 2 shows, to the prophet, looking back to the pangs of Rachel, from ver. 10 onward, a symbolical reality. The painful struggle of the people in their forsakenness serves, as Is. vii. 14, for the ground of the Messianic view that amid the writhings, from this people as mother, the Messiah should be born.

Ver. 10. But truly that must be preceded yet by much distress. **Writhe and thrust forth,** namely, the fruit of the body, who may counsel thee, since thou hast no counsellor. The cognate form גֹּחַ, stands here as Ps. xx. 10 transitively instead of the intransitive גִּיחַ; cf. a similar irregularity in שׁוֹב instead of הֵשִׁיב (Ps. cxxvi. 4, *et sæp.*). **Writhe, daughter of Zion, as the travailing woman.** It is high time that the birth which brings deliverance should follow, for the deepest trouble is at hand; **for now thou must go forth out of the city.** "To go forth," spoken of those besieged, is the same as "to surrender" (Is. xxxvi. 16; 2 Kings xxiv. 12). That קִרְיָה has no article, does not make it equivalent to the Latin *urbs* (Caspari, Keil), for the Latin has no article, and the Latin *urbs* (the well-known city) would be paralleled rather by הַקִּרְיָה, but there lies in מִן, as often, the negative consequence: to go out so that thou art no more a city (Is. xxiii. 1). **And must dwell in the field,** while thou art carried away captive (Is. xxxvi. 17; Hos. xii. 10); **and come unto Babylon.** This sharp announcement, reaching far beyond the immediately threatening danger from Assyria, marks the summit level of Micah's threatening, the last step of the climax (i. 9; ii. 4; iii. 12; iv. 10). It is of decisive importance also for the historical criticism of the prophets, since by it the criterion that everything must be easily understood from the present position, according to which the prophecy Is. xiii. f., *e.g.*, has been denied to Isaiah, falls to the ground. The prophecy is to be comprehended not by what an acute thinker might gather in a natural way concerning the immediate future, but only from an insight into the entire body of Old Testament prophecy. We can, to be sure, by that natural explanation, point to the fact that Babylon in Micah's time belonged to the Assyrian monarchy, that it with its alternative name Shinar appears also in the undisputed portions of Isaiah (ch. xi. 11) as a land in hostility with Judah, into which the Assyrians used to deport their captives (2 Chr. xxxiii.

11); that it lay in part on this side of the Euphrates, therefore nearer to Judah than Nineveh beyond the Tigris; and finally, that it was the older (cf. Gen. x. 8, 10), and so the more celebrated capital of the Mesopotamian country.

Still, all these circumstances, while they deserve to be taken into the account, do not suffice for explaining how, just here in the decisive passage of Micah, instead of the real hostile power, Assyria, the subordinate vassal is named, and that so that the designation, although intended in a purely natural manner, could have appeared to the scornful and unbelieving men of that day (ch. ii) as nothing but a ridiculous paradox. Rather does Micah, in using this name "Babylon" (Babel), assume the position, resting on the Pentateuch, which regards the history of Israel as a history of the kingdom of God. This is by preference presented in the Scriptures, under the view of an antithesis between the holy city Jerusalem, on the one side (and the holy king David), and, on the other, the God-hating city Babylon, and the God-despising king Nimrod (ver. 5). The reason why the world in enmity against God should be represented by this particular type, which runs on through the whole Scripture (Rev. xvi. 19; xvii. 5; xviii. 21), lies in the account given in Gen. xi. (cf. x. 10 f.). This purports that just here mankind had the audacity to attempt the building of the tower, against the will of God, a view which is supported by a comparison of that report with Is. xiii. 13 ff., where the punishment threatened against Babylon is referred to that original transgression. On the other hand, the etymology of the name Nimrod also came to the support of this symbolism. — נִמְרוֹד N. Semitic = Heb. יִמְרֹד, derived from מרד (as יהוה, "the Existing," from חיה), therefore "the insurgent" (cf. Job xxiv. 13). With the Assyrain termination — ak: Merodach.

The threatening of our passage, accordingly, theologically considered, indicates nothing less than that God's commonwealth, before the coming of salvation, must be given up amid fearful catastrophes to the kingdom of the world. This theological view is, in the spirit of the prophets, the only possible one. That the simply historical apprehension does not suffice, is palpable: the oppression of Sennacherib carried away no Jew to Babylon. Accordingly, the Elders in Jeremiah xxv. 18 ff. in agreement with ver. 12 of our chapter — where also it is said that the immediate assault of the enemy will be baffled, — regard this prophecy of Micah as having been taken back.

The prophet is perfectly conscious that with this threatening he has spoken the severest word which could be uttered against the city; not merely oppression, division of lands, destruction of their houses and sanctuaries; not merely annihilation of the kingdom and worship; not merely shameful defeat and prostration under an insolent foe; but removal from the land with which all the promises were inseparably connected (Gen. xii. 7; xxvii. 28); the curse in which all the curses of the law culminate. Hence he offers a word of comfort at once, before he proceeds with his threatening: **There shalt thou be delivered; there will Jehovah redeem thee,** properly, buy thee back (Ps. lxxviii. 54), since the delivering up of Israel is conceived of as a sale on God's part (Ps. xliv. 13; Is. iv. 1 ff.) **out of the hand of thy enemies.** In the end it must yet again become light above the people of God.

Ver. 11. The brief gleam of sunlight, however, in the distant future, is immediately overshadowed by the clouds of the nearer time: **Yea, now are gathered against thee,** not to hear the law (ver. 2), but for war — עַל as Ob. 1 — **many nations.** The distress is naturally, in the prophet's view, the same as that at which he had glanced ver. 9, as the parallel use of עתה proves. The chronological interpretation of Theodoret, adopted by Calvin, Cocceius, Marck, Hengstenberg, that after the redemption from the Babylonian captivity there will be another time of oppression, together with the discovery of the Maccabees in our passage, which it necessitates, regards Micah not as a prophet, but as a diviner. It is opposed, moreover, both by the עתה, which never signifies *deinde*, and by the fact that we have here to do with the hostile invasion of "nations," by which the national army of Mesopotamia may well be intended, but the mercenary collections of Antiochus cannot.[1] **Who say: Let her be defiled** by our encampment on the holy places (Ob. 16; Ps. xxxv. 16), **and let our eyes feast upon Zion.** — Singular of the verb with plural of the following subject, Gesenius, § 147, a: חזה with ב, cf. Ob. 12.

Ver. 12. For the present, however, God wills the affliction only, not the destruction of Zion, which is reserved for the later judgment. **But they know not the thoughts of Jehovah,** which are very different from men's thoughts (Is. lv. 8 ff.), **and understand not his counsel,** to wit, **that he collects them,** brings them in troops before Jerusalem to assault her (Joel iv. 9 ff.), not to deliver Jerusalem into their hands, but **as a sheaf** (*sing. coll.*) **into the threshing floor,** that he may have them together for the judgment. The shadow of Sennacherib falls across the scene.

Ver. 13. And thus there comes, before the final deliverance, a moment of proud delight for Judah: **Arise, and thresh daughter of Zion: Trample** down as an ox which will tread upon the outspread grain in the straw, to stamp out the corn with the hoofs. Cf. Is. xxviii. 28 and Cyrill. on the passage: *Παιδες συνενεγκότες ἐξ ἀγρῶν ἐπὶ τὴν ἅλωνα δράγματα εἶτα βοῦς ἐπαφίεντες καὶ ἐν κύκλῳ περικομίζοντες καταλεπτύνουσι ταῖς χηλαῖς τὰς ἀστάχυας.* The comparison with the threshing cattle leads the prophet, through the association of ideas, to represent the power of the attack of the Jews upon the enemy by the familiar figure of the horns, as a symbol of strength, while yet he continues the picture of the threshing by the mention of the hoof: **for thy horn will I make iron** (Deut. xxxiii. 17), **and thy hoofs I will make brass** (Job xxviii. 2). **And thou shalt beat in pieces many nations. And I will devote** (cf. Lev. xxvii. 28) **to Jehovah their gain** (the goods they have collected by robbery, Judges v. 19), **and their treasures to the Lord of the whole earth,** to Jehovah, who through the subjugation of the heathen will have shown himself such (Ps. xcvi., xciii).

The distinction which here appears, between the revealing God speaking in the prophet, the Logos, and the God dwelling in heaven, presents itself also elsewhere in prophecy (Hos. i. 2; Is. xlviii. 16). Zachariah calls the former "the angel that talked with me" (ch. i. 13, *et sæpe*). He is, according to our passage, the same that also in the name of God crushes the enemies (Ps. xxxvi. 5, 6).

1 [Dr. Pusey *in loc.* presents strongly, and enlarges, the arguments for understanding this of the oppressions in the time of the Maccabees. — Tr.]

Verse 14 [Eng. vers. v. 1] however, puts a check upon the expectation raised high by this announcement. There will indeed a judgment follow upon the heathen before Jerusalem, and the prophecy of Isaiah (xxx. 27 ff.) concerning the overthrow of the next approaching army of Assyria has its truth; but just as certainly has that of Micah himself also, previously given (iii. 12), concerning the extreme humiliation of Jerusalem. — This explanation of the seeming contradiction between vers. 13 and 14 appears the most obvious. Still the other view, supported by Keil, that vers. 12, 13, concerning the Assyrian calamity, contemplate the final catastrophe of the heathen before Jerusalem (cf. Ezek. xxxviii.), and so belong to the eschatology of Micah, cannot be absolutely rejected as untenable. — **Now,** for this time of the judgment, which will strike thee also, **gather thyself in troops** (Jer. v. 7) **thou daughter of the troop.** בַּת before גְּדוּד, as before Zion (ver. 10), has the significance of a personifying address, in a relation of apposition with the following word: thou daughter of war-troops, *i. e.*, thou people of Zion gathered in troops (1 Sam. i. 16), crowded together after the manner of a troop in war;[1] gathered in troops, not indeed for attack merely, but from melancholy necessity; for **they have set a siege against us.** The prophet reckons himself with his people (cf. on i. 8). Nor does the trouble stop with the siege; **With a staff they smite on the cheek the judge of Israel**; it leads to the extreme disgrace of Israel (cf. 1 Kings xxiii. 24; Job xvi. 10) in the person of their judge, *i. e.* of him who stands at the head of the people, and who, if probably the king is meant, as Am. ii. 3, is still not called מֶלֶךְ or מֹשֵׁל, because this dignity, in the view of the prophets, is reserved for the Messiah (ver. 2), and in the afflictions preceding the Messiah properly exists not at all or only in a God-forsaken plight (ver. 9).

Vers. 1–8 [Eng. vers. v. 2–9]. The description of the birth-pangs of salvation is ended, and the prophet turns, as in iv. 1 ff., to the prediction of that by which the salvation described shall come, namely, *the person and work of the Messiah.* While Jerusalem labors and has no strength to bring forth, God of his own strength sends the Messiah. With the aggravation of the threatening the promise also is enhanced.

Vers. 1–4 a [2–5]. As the little Zion will become great among the mountains of the world, so among the cities will the little Bethlehem. The new flight of the discourse connects itself with iv. 14, as iv. 1 does with iii. 12, and iv. 9 with iv. 8. **But thou Bethlehem-Ephratah!** The addition of the ancient name from Gen. xxxv. 16 heightens the impression of solemnity, and contains an allusion also, judging from the paronomasias in chapter first. The stem פָּרָה, Hiph. "to make fruitful," recalls the name of the Messiah, "*Zemach*," "branch" or "shoot" (Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. iii. 8); as also in the name Bethlehem itself, *i. e.* Bread-house, an allusion may be discovered to the time of blessing in the kingdom of David, cf. the Abi-ad of Is. ix 6. The name is construed as masculine, not because the population is addressed (Keil: but then precisely the feminine would be required), but on account of the masc. בַּיִת contained in the name; "thou Bread-house of fruitfulness." **Small art thou among the districts of Judah.** Some: too small to be, but in that case מִן must stand and not לְ, and צָעִיר could hardly fail to have the article to mark the apposition. Rather צָעִיר is a predicate, and the infinitive with לְ stands, as often, in place of the finite verb (Prov. xix. 8; Ps. cxiii. 8, cf. ver. 9; Is. xxi. 1; Eccl. ii. 3; 2 Chr. xi. 12), so that the translation in Matt. ii. 6 is correct even to the οὐδαμῶς which anticipates the sense, and that of Luther corresponds exactly to the original. The LXX. translate the לִהְיוֹת twice: ὀλιγοστὸς εἶ τοῦ εἶναι.[2] *Alafim*, prop. "thousands," are according to Num. i. 16, x. 4, the greater divisions into which the tribes were parted.

Bethlehem was so small that it is wanting in the catalogue of cities in the book of Joshua. The LXX. indeed have it, and this warrants the conjecture of Jerome that it originally stood in the Hebrew text and was afterward stricken out, not, certainly, stricken out, as Jerome supposes, to obscure the derivation of the Messiah from the tribe of Judah, but plainly because the Rabbinic critics, sharing the interpretation of our passage rejected above, felt obliged to correct the text of Joshua accordingly [?] In Ezra i. 21, and Neh. vii. 26, Bethlehem is numbered in the Hebrew also as one of the families of Judah; but it is wanting in Neh. xi. 25, among the cities rebuilt immediately after the exile, and in the N. T. time it is called merely a κώμη (John vii. 42), a χωρίον (Joseph., *Ant.*, v. 2, 8).

As the Flock-tower will be again honored as the seat of the old dominion, so will Bethlehem, the home of David, as the starting-point of the new Ruler. **Out of thee will go forth for me** (cf. Jer. xxx. 24) **he who is to be a ruler** (cf. מֶמְשָׁלָה, iv. 8) **in Israel.** לִהְיוֹת without subject rests on the construction in the preceding member of the verse. The subject is left undetermined because it is immediately determined by the predicate, and, besides, the idea "out of thee" must first be made prominent, which would have been thrown into the background by naming the subject in the former member, — **And whose outgoings are from of old, from the days of ancient time.** It is not a new thing which Micah prophesies; but he whose origin he announces is one with the long promised Messiah of the stock of David. That the "of old" means directly the ancient time of the kingdom of David, which lay for Micah already in the distance of three hundred years, appears possible to be inferred from Am. ix. 11, where it is said in a quite similar connection: "I will build the house of David as in the days of old (cf. *sup.*, iv. 8). Still, the prophet, who everywhere speaks out of the full compass of God's organic kingdom (cf. on chap. iv. ver. 10), may have carried back his view even to the origin of the promise, even to the promise given to Eve, as the emphatic accumulation of the phrase suggests. "For a period of inconceivable length the ruler goes forth, and is coming, who will finally proceed from Bethlehem. For, since he it is toward whom the history of mankind,

1 [גְּדוּד almost always means an irregular band of plundering soldiers, on a foray or raid, and in calling Jerusalem the daughter of such a troop, the prophet seems to intimate the lawlessness, violence, and injustice of which she had been guilty, and for which she was to be repaid in kind. — Tr.]

2 Cf. Textual and Grammatical on the passage.

of Israel, of the house of David, look, all the steps in the progress of these are preparations for his coming, goings-forth of the second son of Jesse." Hoffman, *Schriftbeweis*, ii. 1, 9. Only this are we hardly allowed to say, that our passage, in the sense of the prophet, gives a strict proof of the antemundane life of the Messiah. Besides, the expression translated "ancient times" is too ambiguous. Matthew, if he had held that interpretation, would certainly not have left this so important proof-text untranslated. Yet history has attached to the ambiguous word of the prophet this definite sense, and that we, when we read the passage, so understand it, is natural, and only an application of the maxim, that God's revealing deeds are explanations of his revealing words, and *vice versa*. And, in fact, that no other reference of our passage is historically possible, than that to the birth of Christ, is obvious. So was it understood, not merely by Matt. ii. 6, but also by the scribes (Matt. ii. 5; John vii. 41 f.), nay, even by the emperor Hadrian, who, to kill the pseudo-Messianic disturbances at the root, caused all the Jews to be driven out of the region round about Bethlehem (Reland, J., 647; Tertullian, *Cont. Jud.*, chap. 13), and the refutation of the strange propositions of the Jewish theology after Christ hardly required the great toil which Hengstenberg has expended upon them. The great freedom with which Matthew gives the citation is to be judged according to 2 Cor. iii. 6. Calvin: "*Semper attendant lectores, quorsum adducant evangelistæ scripturæ locos, ne scrupulose in singulis verbis insistant, sed contenti sint hoc uno, quod scriptura nunquam torquetur ab illis in alienum sensum.*" The word מוֹצָאֹתָיו is chosen in reference to Hos. vi. 3; the employment of the plural is explained by the older interpreters (Jerome, Trem., Jun.) on the theory that Micah speaks of the eternal, unceasing procession of the Son from the Father. Coccejus: "*Omnibus diebus seculi egreditur filius a patre et eternum est ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.*" That, however, is an importation of the previously conceived dogmatic notion, without support from the language. Hengstenberg's explanation, "place of origin," is linguistically more appropriate (Num. xxxiii. 2; Ps. lxx. 7), yet apart from the true sense, for the "days of eternity" are not place, and the assertion that מוֹצָא in general cannot mean the *actus exeundi*, is arbitrary; cf. the forms מַדָּע, מַעֲשֶׂה, מַפֵּלָה, etc. The plural may most simply be regarded as the rhetorical plural especially frequent in poetical diction (Ps. cxiv. 2; xlix. 4, and the תוֹצָאוֹת, Prov. iv. 31); yet further on a deeper side-design of the prophet will appear.

Vers. 2 [3]. But how does this gracious purpose of God agree with the heavy threatenings in chap. iv. ver. 14? That is explained by ver. 2, since it begins, paradoxically enough, with לָכֵן, not "although," but "because." **Therefore,** precisely because Israel is to be redeemed not by his own power, but by the gracious gift of the Messiah, and because not out of the secure city of Zion, but out of that despised Bethlehem, this Messiah must come, **will he give them up**; that is, God gives Israel into the hands of the enemy, נָתַן as 2 Chr. xxx. 6, **until the time that she that bears has borne.** Who she is that bears cannot be doubtful from chap. iv. 8 ff. Then the people were compared to Rachel. Rachel must groan anew at the Tower of the flock, that the new birth might come to pass. The one in travail, accordingly, is not any individual woman, as for instance the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus (Hengstenberg), but the people of Judah, of whom it was predicted Gen. xlix. 10, that a ruler sprung from them should never fail until Shiloh should come, which Shiloh Micah understands as a person, and in ver. 4 a, replaces by Shalom. In Hos. xiii. 13, Israel has not come to the birth, but Judah is in Is. vii. 14, cf. ix. 6, also the pregnant maiden who shall bring forth the Immanuel. In the last distress the Messiah is born, whose outgoings, therefore, are as old as the time when the first seed of promise went forth, — as when God comforted his people with the prospect of "a time when the travailing woman should bear;" as old therefore as Abraham and Adam (Gen. xii. 3). In Micah's mind, as the connection of these two verses shows, the same conclusion is drawn as Paul plainly expresses, Gal. iii. 16: not of many seeds does the promise speak, but of one: and so, all the births which have taken place since that promise, and in the line of it, are, as being only members of the genealogy leading to the Messiah, goings-forth of himself, the One. And as the people appear here as his mother, not a single family line leads to him, but all. Thus there is no incongruity in the fact that the people, after the representative capital, is called the daughter of Zion, while yet he comes from Bethlehem.

That is the fullness of the time when the gathering of the people, which for the present only false prophets can promise (ii. 12), will take place. The sentence with וְ connects itself to the preceding as if after עַד stood instead of עֵת, a final temporal clause: until (she that bears shall have borne) **and the residue of his brethren return** (out of the captivity: iv. 10). Instead of the customary *terminus technicus*, שְׁאֵרִית (cf. on ii. 12), which returns again afterwards, we have the synonymous יֶתֶר (as Zech. xiv. 2), perhaps to indicate that we have to do not merely with the inhabitants of Judah left from the judgment, but with other estranged sons of Abraham, namely, with the members of the ten tribes, now long revolted from David. So the word is interpreted by Hoffman also, and Caspari, and Keil. That these scattered ones are his, the Messiah's brethren, is manifest from our explanation of the first half of the verse, but it is emphatically brought out: only as his brethren have they a right to return to (עַל = לְ, Prov. xxvi. 11) **the sons of Israel,** his race (Is. liiii. 8).

Vers. 3 [4]. For not theirs is the power, but **he will stand,** in the position of a governor, as a shepherd among his flock (Is. lxi. 5), **and feed,** perform God's office (Ps. xxiii., xcv.), as the true follower of David called from the flock to the kingdom (cf. on iv. 8, but also Rev. xii.), **in the power of Jehovah** (cf. Is. ix. 5; xi. 2), **in the majesty of the name of his father,** which he himself will bear (Is. ix. 5; cf. x. 21), and whose *Gaôn* (majesty) has already, in ancient times, proved itself mighty over his people (Ex. xv. 7). **And they shall abide** [Kleinert: *settle*], dwell in peace, as is described chap. iv. ver. 4. **And now** (עתה spoken from the standing-point of the fulfillment, as in iv. 7) **is He great,** He alone (cf. Joel ii. 21, 20, and the citation Luke i. 32) **unto the end of the earth;** the kingdom has

become a universal kingdom (chap. iv. ver. 1 ff.; Ps. lxxii. 8).

The three first words of ver. 4 are to be connected immediately with ver. 3, and to be separated from the following: **And He will be peace.** Thus only arises a satisfactory sense, and the beautiful structure of the third verse comes into view: (1 a) and He stands, (b) and He feeds in the power of Jehovah, (c) and in the majesty of the name of Jehovah; (2 a) and they dwell, (b) for now is He great even to the ends of the earth, (c) and He will be peace. "Peace" is the Messiah called, as quite similarly (Eph. ii. 14) αὐτός ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, with which cf. Judg. vi. 24; Is. ix. 5. The reference to Gen. xlix. 10, indicated on ver. 2 is manifest, as Ezekiel also offers a personal interpretation of the obscure term Shiloh (chap. xxi. ver. 32). Peace is the characteristic feature in all the descriptions of the Messiah's kingdom (cf. particularly, Is. xi. 9, 6). And as David had already, in reference to the great mission, named the heir of the promise (2 Sam. vii.) Solomon, man of peace, it was doubly natural for the prophet, who had before his eyes everywhere the mutual connection of the historical relations, and who had also (chap. iv. ver. 4) looked back to the time of Solomon, to say: He will be the true Solomon, seeing that the first one effected not the peace, but the sundering of the kingdom (1 K. xi. 31 ff.).

Ver. 4 [5], b, 5 [6]. The security and power of the new kingdom, God's kingdom, stands in antagonism to the world-kingdom, and can attain to its restoration only by the destruction of the latter (Ps. ii. 9). This is represented here under the name of Assyria, also in its historical, typical signification, as a universal empire, as in Is. xxvii. 13, while in iv. 10 Babylon appears in the same light. **Asshur,** whatever Assyria it may be (L. Bauer: another Assyria;) Castalio compares Virgil's verse: "*Alter erit tunc Tiphys et altera quæ vehat Argo delectos heroas;*" **when he cometh into our land,** — the prophet speaks as a member of the people, — **and when he treadeth upon our palaces, then we will set up against him** (עַל, as Judg. ix. 43) **seven shepherds and eight princes of men.** The distinctive terms, "palace," "seven," and "eight," connect themselves with the threatening formula with which Amos (chaps. i., ii.) announces the approach of the avenging catastrophe. The grace will be mightier than the sin; hence, instead of the three and four sins, which, according to Amos ii. 4, make the judgment necessary, seven and eight heroes are named, who shall drive away the enemy. The seven and eight are, as we may suppose, not coördinate with the one in whose hands, according to 5 b, the main transaction rests, but subordinate to him. That the sense is only that the Messiah will afford the same protection to the people as a number of heroes (Umbreit, and still earlier Hengstenberg), is intimated by nothing in the text. Obadiah also in a quite similar connection has the plural (ver. 21). They are called shepherds, since the prophet, from ver. 2 on, has constantly used the figure of feeding (pasturing) for dominion, to recall the pastoral origin of the dynasty of David. Whether here the function of leadership in war, or that of which John (xii. f.) speaks, is most prominent in the figure, cannot be determined. Jeremiah (xx.), Ezekiel (xxxiv.), and Zechariah, after the example of our prophet, and of Ps. xxiii. and xcv., present further developments of the figure; the final amplification of it, within the limits of Scripture, is given by Jesus himself in John x.

Nasikh is not an anointed one, but one formally installed in office, a prince (Caspari, cf. Hupfeld on Ps. ii. 6), and נְסִיכֵי אָדָם are princes among the children of men (Ewald, § 287, g).

Ver. 5 [6]. **And they shall feed** [down], while the protective agency for Israel is turned (cf. Ps. ii. 9; Rev. ii. 27) into a destructive one for the heathen, **the land of Asshur with the sword, and the land of Nimrod with his** [her] **gates.** Nimrod likewise is a typical designation (cf. iv. 10). The defeat of the enemy will drive them from the gates of Jerusalem, into which they would press, to their own gates, and crush them there (cf. Is. xxviii. 6). **So will He,** the Messiah, **deliver from Asshur when He cometh into our land, and when He treadeth on our borders.** Climax: not at all shall the enemy reach Jerusalem, but at the very border shall they be met and thrust back.

It appears from a comparison with chap. iv. ver. 2, that the prophet makes a distinction among the heathen themselves between those who are disposed to salvation and those who are hardened against it. The one class will voluntarily press towards salvation, the others, by irresistible, judicial power be brought to a recognition of God's sovereignty (Ps. ii. 12). Thus also the apparent contradiction between our passage and Is. xix. 23 ff. is explained. The same antithesis is carried through in what follows: —

Vers. 6–8 [7–9]. The people of God, in its participation in the work of the Messiah, is a beneficent dew for those who seek God, a destructive one for those who hate Him; Luke iii. 34; Rom. ix. 33 *coll.* Is. viii. 14; xxviii. 16. **Then will the remnant of Jacob,** which through the Messiah will have shared in salvation (cf. on ver. 2), **be in the midst of the abundance of the peoples** (cf. chap. iv. ver. 2) **as dew,** image of the vivifying refreshment which descends from heaven (Hos. xiv. 6) **from Jehovah,** not by human caprice and calculation, and with human failures (Is. lv. 10), **as rain-showers on the grass.** Grass without rain presents a dry and withered appearance, and with it, therefore, a God-forsaken people may well be compared (Is. xl. 6), as again with a field full of dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii.). If elsewhere the rain coming from God is mentioned with reference to the certainty of its fertilizing effect (Is. lv. 10), here it is thought of as that **which tarrieth not for men, and waiteth not for the children of men,** which (as is implied in the phrase "from Jehovah," in the first member) is not at all dependent on the doings and strivings of men, but alone on the grace of God which supplies it according to his own thoughts and his own laws (Is. lv. 8). Umbreit: The Lord's congregation is, in its heavenly call, in its independence of the favor of men, a dew which falls in refreshing drops on the herbage of the world; it works with as fertilizing an effect on the variously stocked field of the peoples round about.

Ver. 7 [8]. **But again will also the remnant of Jacob be among the heathen, in the midst of the abundance of the peoples as a lion . . . unsparingly.** That the figures of dew and a lion stand in contrast, is obvious; and to attempt to combine them with reference to the element common to both, suddenness — Israel will fall like dew as unexpectedly as a lion on his prey (Hitzig) — empties the passage of meaning, to say nothing of the turgidity. Our verse runs parallel to ver. 5, as ver. 6 to chap. iv. ver. 2 ff.

Ver. 8 [9]. With exulting shout the prophet

cheers Israel on, as he marches toward the object indicated in the preceding verse: **High be thy hand** (Is. xxvi. 11) **above thine oppressors,** — he goes forth, not in pride, but summoned by oppression, for defense, — **and let all thy foes be cut off.** Cf. Is. lx. 12.

Vers. 9–14 [10–15]. *The Threatening which lies in the Promise.* If Israel, the kingdom of the future, is to be established, it must be pure, pure from confidence in any help beside God's, whether human measures, force of arms, and the like, or idols. Accordingly, God must root out of Israel all abominations, before the judgment on the rebellious nations can come. Cf. 1 Pet. iv. 17; Jer. xxv. 29. **And it will come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah, that I will destroy thy horses out of the midst of thee, and . . . strongholds.** Parallel to our prophecy, and serving as a commentary upon it, stand many passages in the prophet Isaiah. He also mentions first of all the war-chariots and cavalry which had been brought in from Egypt simultaneously with the origin of idolatry, as an abomination in the eyes of God (ii. 7, cf. xxxi. 1; 1 Kings x. 21 f.), and declares that the fortresses must be destroyed (ii. 15); because all that is flesh and not spirit, and Israel shall be delivered not by man (xxxi. 8). If the kingdom of peace is to come, the putting away of the weapons of war (iv. 8) must begin in Israel. From the same point of view is the mention of cities to be regarded. Sacred history derives the first origin of cities from the first murderer; the close aggregation of men for mutual protection (Gen. iv. 17), that is, on account of the experience and further apprehension of murder and homicide. Compare the positive term of the prophecy, Ezek. xxxviii. 12; Zech. ii. 8 f.

Ver. 11 [12]. As the self-help through war, so vanishes also self-deception through unprofitable and ensnaring idolatry, which, in contrast with the reverence for Jehovah expressed in prophecy and worship, is characterized by the two marks of divination and worship of idols: **And I will destroy divinations out of thy hand, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers.** Sign-mongering by hand (with staves, rods, drinking-cups, etc.) and observations of the sky and clouds (both can be understood from the word מעונן, from ענן, a cloud), are used to represent all kinds of sorcery and magic.

Ver. 12 [13]. **Then will I cut off thy stone images and thy molten images out of the midst of thee; and no more shalt thou worship the work of thy hands.**

Ver. 13 [14]. **And I will tear down thy Asherahs** — אשׁירה, as Deut. vii. 5 irregularly written with י in the penult denotes, according to the derivation from אשׁר, related to ישׁר, the tree-trunk stuck upright in the ground to be worshipped (Deut. xvi. 21), such as were the symbols of the nature-gods in the Canaanitish idolatry — **out of the midst of thee, and destroy thy cities.** These are regarded here not as fortified places, but as seats of false worship, as i. 5. cf. Is. xv. 1.

Ver. 14. **Then,** when thus the purification is completed within thee, **I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath on the people who have not heard.** This last addition establishes, through the implied consequence, that some heathen nations will hear, the distinction made on ver. 5.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

A light, a city on a hill, toward which the heathen stream — that is the holy congregation (Matt. v. 14). In the time of salvation she is loosed, by the catastrophe spoken of in iii. 12, from her natural substratum, the little earthly hill of Zion, and in her spiritual significance, as no longer a mere centre of a temporal system of worship, but the source of the perfect instruction concerning God, exalted high above all that is high on the earth. As upon the figure of David the prophetic figure of the Messiah is developed, so upon the figure of Jerusalem is the prophetic figure of the holy community of the future (cf. Ps. lxxxvii.). As once from the tower of Babylon, which they had raised for themselves, sinners were scattered over the world, so God now sets up the banner around which they are to assemble. From men the multitude of ways, from Him the oneness of way. From men the centrifugal power, from Him the centripetal. Now must the deceitful voices of the gods and the oracles be dumb, to inquire of which the heathen travelled over land and sea; inquiries of the heavens also and of the abyss (Deut. xxx. 12 ff.) must cease. The world is aroused to receive the statute and watch-word of God which goes forth from Zion. And this watch-word is Peace, not the peace which the world giveth, for "in the world ye shall have tribulation," but which God alone can give, when He becomes judge of the nations. He has become the God of the world, the calling of Israel the religion of the world. Then there is a quiet, blessed abiding; God's congregation are the quiet in the land. With glorified lustre the times of Solomon, the Peaceful, return. And whatever of noble fame there is among men grows pale before his name, or receives new splendor through his name.

But that the light may burn clear it must first be purified from the dross. Not with the proud, who rejoice in their own light, dwells the Holy who is the only light, and a burning flame for the ungodly, but with those who are humble and of a contrite spirit (Is. lvii. 15). Not until he is crippled in the contest with God does Israel receive the blessing (Gen. xxxii. 25). The tower to which the congregation turn is not a regal, but a flock-tower. From the flock proceeds the rule, and the flock are the ruled. David was a shepherd, shepherds first heard of the Saviour, a shepherd was He himself.

But until then, until the spiritual completion of things, the way is still long. Jerusalem is still standing, and must first pass through the purifying judgments, whose end was described, ch. iii. 12. Heavily struggles the congregation which is to be made perfect, under the terrors of the judgment. Out of her must the Messiah be born, from whom help cometh. But wave upon wave rushes on and dashes her that travaileth, yea, the waves will sweep her away from the shore where she thought herself concealed. Under God's severe dealings there must first come upon Zion's lips the cry: "Lord, depart from me, for I am a sinner," before she can hear it said from his lips: "Fear not, for from henceforth shalt thou catch men." And although she arise in might, so long as her Messiah is not born, all her labors come to nought, she labors in vain and spends her strength for nought (Is. xlix. 4). She must endure the worst.

Over against her stands the world-power, defiant from ancient times, and grown up together with

her. And to the fullest power of manifestation must she come, yea, must accomplish the last shame of subjugation and extermination upon the inheritance of God, before she can herself be judged; for God judgeth not before the time is fulfilled (Gen. xv. 16). But the days of the world-power also are numbered. She is allowed by God to perform her work and she performs it; but while she gathers all her might, she gathers it still only for the destruction which God has appointed to her.

For, when the time is fulfilled, the Messiah will be born of the travailing congregation. Not indeed in the outward Zion. Over that hangs the doom of destruction. But the poor of the world hath God chosen. Out of little Bethlehem will He come toward whom all the promises have pointed from the beginning, because from the beginning He was with God, and toward his coming all history looks. Israel is abandoned, but abandoned for the glory of God, which shall be accomplished through the Messiah. When everything totters, under the divine judgments, He alone stands firm and enters on his shepherd office to fulfill the prophecy of the kingdom; through Him God becomes the world-God, and Israel's religion the world-religion, and in Him is the Peace, yea, He is Himself Peace.

But the world will not have the peace. The heathen flow unto it; some of them however do not join in this movement, but would destroy the kingdom. These flow on to be judged. It is another David who acts the shepherd here. For falling and for rising again, one for life another for death, thus stands the Messiah, and with Him the congregation of God, in the midst of the nations, in the midst of history.

Those who belong to Him are a congregation of the holy, separated from all that is impure, from all in which man trusts apart from God, which he loves and fears besides God; and therefore triumphant, because God maintains her cause.

Hengstenberg: It makes no difference as to the thing whether the nations walk with their bodily feet or with the feet of the soul, whether they move toward the proper Mount Zion, or toward the Church, which was typified by that, only that the beginning of the pilgrimage must belong to a time when symbol and thing signified were still together, the outward Zion was still the seat of the Church. Incessantly strides the divine judgment towards its final issue, irresistibly the divine grace wrests from the enemy the prey which appeared to be given up to them forever. New phases of sin introduce new phases of judgment, a new phase of worldliness a new onset of the world-power. That the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Old Testament forms a side object of the occurrences of the New Testament, that, however, this object was with none of the latter the only object, that each of them, rather, has its significance apart from prophecy, and that by this significance prophecy and history are both equally ruled, is everywhere manifest. Among the blessings which the Messiah should bring to the congregation of the righteous, is first perceived the fundamental benefit, the condition of all others, namely, the transformation which He will produce in the disposition of the covenant people. This above all things must be changed, if they are not still further to be given up to judgment. False Israel is the proper booty of the world.

Schmieder: The three periods of deliverance in Micah give the basis for subsequent prophecy; (1.) The redemption from Babylon is unfolded by Is. xl.–lx., and in such a way that this redemption becomes the typical form for the entire subsequent development of the kingdom of God. (2.) The deliverance of Jerusalem from the universal attack of the nations is represented in Ezek. xxxviii.–xxxix. as the last triumph of Israel. (3.) The rescue from the last calamity of all, in which the city itself is conquered, and the judge of Israel is mocked, lies at the bottom of the concluding prophecy of Zechariah.

Calwer Bible: That is a comfort to him, that God's instruments of punishment upon Israel find also an avenger again for their tyranny, even in the people of Israel, although these must first have passed under the rod.

Schlier: Not until Zion the impure has been destroyed, can it become the seat of God's holy dominion; Zion's people must first be led far away as captives, before they become a people strong in the Lord and victorious over all peoples; Zion's king must be deeply humbled before the true king of David's lineage comes, who brings everlasting peace to his people.

Of the fulfillment. Justin Martyr (*Dial. c. Tr.*): As many of us as, moved by the law and by the word coming out of Jerusalem, through the Apostles, have come to the faith, and fled for refuge to the God of Jacob and of Israel, filled until then with war and slaughter and all iniquity, we have everywhere changed the instruments of war into instruments of peace, and are building piety, righteousness, philanthrophy, faith, hope, etc.

Calvin: Although God governed the ancient people by the hand of David, Josiah, Hezekiah, yet there lay as it were a shadow between, so that God ruled in a hidden way. The prophet, accordingly, here expresses the difference between that typical outline-shadow of the kingdom and the later, new kingdom which God would reveal through the Messiah. And that is truly and definitely fulfilled in the person of Christ. For although Christ was the true seed of David, He was still at the same time Jehovah, that is, God manifest in the flesh.

Hengstenberg thinks himself obliged, following ancient examples, to interpret iv. 9–14 in an apocalyptic way, as a chronological series, so that in vers. 9, 10 the Babylonian catastrophe, in ver. 11 the Maccabean struggles, in ver. 14 the oppressions of the Romans should be foretold. Compare, on the contrary, the explanation given above.

Rosenm., Casp., and Keil give an eschatological reference to these verses.

Schmieder: It is an entire mistake to interpret this great prophecy of Micah of any one historical event, as though it was completely fulfilled in that. The interpretation corresponds nowhere in its entire fullness, not even with the expressly promised deliverance from Babylon. This should not expose the prophecy to suspicion, but only warn us against the undue haste of expositors. The prophecy rests on visions which represent, not separate historical events, but which in large, figurative sketches show the course of the development of God's kingdom. What the Holy Spirit thus speaks, that the Holy Spirit alone can interpret, not all pious curiosity of historical learning.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

On iv. 1–8. *The kingdom of God.*

1. *Its central point:* the glorified and exalted Zion, the source of the statutes and revelations,

and through grace, the ancient, chosen seat of God's dominion. Ver. 1 a–c, 2 g, h, 8.

2. *Its citizens:* those who flow toward it thirsting for righteousness, longing for salvation. Ver. 1 a, 2 a–f, 6, 7.

3. *Its order:* God's law and God's peace. Ver. 3.

4. *Its blessedness:* rest, security, prosperity. Ver. 4.

5. *Its duration:* eternal, like God Himself. Ver. 5.

Ver. 1. The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory. The city on the hill shines and is not concealed; it is thy own fault if thou see not. Salvation comes of grace; but that thou mayest possess it the voice of desire must be in thy heart. He who would not suffer law and justice, and longs not therefor in humble prostration, is not ready for the Gospel either. — Ver. 3. God's judgments are best, and are clear enough for him who has part in the Holy Ghost. Plough and scythe cease not; sowing and reaping are still attended with toil, but what was a curse has become a blessing. — Ver. 4. Who longs not for rest? In the kingdom of God thou hast peace. The terrors of the world are for him alone who goes with the world. — Ver. 5. In God's name! With that begin all thy work, then will it go on prosperously. — Ver. 6. Even the Old Testament knows that not until after the fullness of the heathen will Israel after the flesh, humbled and contrite, enter into the kingdom. Why is his entrance delayed? Because Christians, instead of regarding God's way, and thus living in peace, consume each other in strife and spiritual warfare, and so throw doubt over the certainty of the divine promises. Until ver. 3 is fulfilled (in a spiritual sense), ver. 6 also will not be fulfilled. — Vers. 7, 8. How will the dominion be? The question is obscure, and can be answered only from the New Testament. One thing only is sure — that God will reign forever.

Hengstenberg: On ver. 2. The ways of the Lord are the ways in which He would have men walk, — the ways of living which are well pleasing to Him. The antithesis is the walking in one's own ways (Is. liii. 6), the direction of the life according to the caprice of the corrupt heart itself.

Michaelis: The Messiah will be a teacher, says Kimchi. And it is quite remarkable how the old teachers of the Jews themselves say expressly, that the Messiah will interpret the words of the law, and discover the errors of the Jews; that the doctrine which men learn before Him will not be considered in comparison with his new law.

Burck: Ver. 3. Jehovah Himself will reign through his law and spirit. The office which ye most shamefully disregard (ver. 3), will be most faithfully discharged.

Michaelis: One may not object to this what Christ says (Matt. x. 34 ff.), that He was not come to bring peace on the earth but a sword; for this happens *per accidens* through human depravity; and these disturbances Christians do not excite but suffer. The perfect fulfillment of this prophecy, moreover, is reserved for the final completion of all things.

Calwer Bible: Ver. 4. Even under Solomon's reign was it so (1 Kings iv. 25), as also the great crowd of men in Israel, which is promised (ii. 12), likewise existed in Israel, according to 1 Kings iv. 20, under Solomon. Solomon's reign was indeed the chief type of the final reign of Messiah.

Caspari: Ver. 5. We have to do with a promise. An admonition, or decree implying an admonition, would not be appropriate here among mere promises. The walking in the name of Jehovah, however, is not to be regarded as a merit deserving salvation, but as a conditioning grace which has been bestowed upon Israel.

Calvin: Ver. 8. The prophet here establishes the souls of the pious, that they may hold out steadfast through the long delay, and not be discouraged by the present defeat so as to despair of the fulfillment of God's promises. The dominion of the daughter of Zion is made prominent, because the king in Israel had obscured the glory of God.

Gulich: It is called the ancient kingdom, (1.) Because it is David's kingdom in his son Christ. (2.) Because it is a kingdom proceeding from among them, not of foreign princes. (3.) Because it is the kingdom of God. (4.) Because it is the kingdom of the twelve tribes reunited as at the time of David and Solomon. (5.) Because it is the kingdom over the heathen as David and Solomon ruled over the heathen.

Luther: Ver. 1. The kingdom of Christ, or the preaching of the Gospel, has been made so sure, and so firmly established, that it can be stifled or exterminated by no power, however great. — Ver. 2. In particular, the prophet wished to show the difference between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Moses and the law. Moses is a dreadful teacher; constrains and drives the people to a shadow of obedience. But the kingdom of Christ has a willing people (Ps. cx.), who of themselves like sheep follow their shepherd. For to such willing obedience are they moved by the great, unspeakable benefits. — Ver. 3. If any one is so utterly unacquainted with Holy Scripture as to interpret this text to mean that a Christian either may not bear arms, or not legitimately use them, he very unskillfully perverts the whole sense of the prophet. For he takes this saying concerning the spiritual kingdom of Christ and applies it to the bodily kingdom; and this he does against the plain Scripture, which enjoins on the temporal magistracy that they should protect their subjects in the enjoyment of their rights, and help maintain the general peace. — Ver. 4. What a great difference is there between householders! Yet if they be Christians, each of them has his noble fruits, with which to help and support others. — Ver. 6. Yet who would be so pusillanimous as not easily to allow God to take away his earthly goods, if he only has sure hope of the heavenly goods?

Starke: Ver. 1. At the time of Christ, Mount Zion stood over all other mountains. The Church of the New Testament has a great preëminence over the Church of the Old Testament. Christ maintains and extends, even amid manifold disruption and desolation of the earthly kingdoms, his spiritual kingdom — the Christian Church on earth — by his Word and Gospel. — Ver. 2. It is not enough that each one believes for himself, one must also excite another by fraternal means unto righteousness. We must not only send others to church, but also visit it ourselves. Not all who come to the church are on that account true members of the church, but only those who come in true simplicity. — Ver. 3. Christians should be a peaceable people and not live in bickerings, strife, and enmity. True piety is rewarded in this world also (1 Tim. iv. 8). — Ver. 5. It is a devilish opinion that men may be saved in all religions. Christ's kingdom is not a worldly but

an eternal kingdom. A Christian must fear God not for a time only, but constantly. — Ver. 6. Bodily plagues and all kinds of chastisements belong to the strange ways of God, by which, however, He seeks to bring the erring into the right way. The cross must give birth to the Church of Christ. Hold fast and endure.

PFAFF: Ver. 1. The church of the New Testament rests on an immovable foundation. Even the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. All the kingdoms of the world are nothing to be considered of in comparison with the kingdom of Christ. —Ver. 3. Because there is still everywhere war, hatred, and enmity among those who should be Christians, the Lord still judges the peoples and punishes the heathen. — Ver. 5. No one is capable of the peace of God except him who walks in the name, and in the power, and according to the commandments of the Lord.

QUANDT: Ver. 1. As Zion, so far as it signified also Jerusalem, was the capital of God's kingdom under the Old Testament, the language of the prophets naturally adapted itself to that, and thus the whole kingdom of God, from its Old Testament germs on toward its New Testament development, on earth and in heaven, was designated by the name of Zion, the mount of God. — Ver. 3. The kingdom of peace is building itself up even in these periods, in so far as Christian people have already beaten many a sword into ploughshares and many a spear into pruning-hooks; this imperfect fulfillment is a pledge of the complete fulfillment.

On chap. iv. 9–14. *Of the struggles of God's congregation.*

They must be maintained —

1. Under heavy sorrow in secure expectation of the final redemption (vers. 9, 10).

2. Under the mighty assaults of the foe in sure confidence that the Lord sits upon the throne (vers. 11, 12).

3. In constant self-examination. For, although the victory must certainly be given to God's cause (ver. 13), nevertheless, until Christ is born in the congregation (and in each individual, ver. 1), the result of every contest is deserved disaster and disgrace (ver. 14).

Ver. 9. Desperate complaint under the struggle and sorrow which God lays upon thee is a sign that Christ is not in thee. See to it that it becomes the right complaint and sadness; then will He, amidst the pain, be born in thee. — Ver. 10. In his misery the prodigal son first found his way to his father's house. —Ver. 11. How much more earnestly must we be concerned that God's name should be hallowed through our faith and life, since we know that to his enemies nothing is more agreeable than to see us dishallowed. While we are not unholy no one can render us so; and those who attempt it do so for their own condemnation and ruin. — Ver. 13. In the fortunes of the congregation there is a constant ebb and flow. Let us be on our guard against pride in apparently prosperous seasons, against despondency in the drought. — Ver. 14. It is a very wretched thing, that many Christians remember not until amid the furious assaults of the enemy that they belong together, so as to spare one another; but at other times for trifling causes refuse salvation to each other and will not dwell under one roof.

HENGSTENBERG: On ver. 9. The mingling together of judgments with promises of salvation should guard believers against vain hopes, which, if not supported by the event, change into so much the deeper despondency. It contains also an indirect solace in itself, for He who sends the prediction of what shall be, under his control must it stand, and "He who sends can turn it away." The greatest reason for our faint-heartedness under the cross is the doubt whether it comes from God.

CALVIN: Ver. 10. As soon as He has strengthened the souls of believers to bear the cross, He adds the hope of salvation.

LUTHER: Birth-pangs indicate not a death but a twofold life, that, namely, the mother is to be delivered of her burden and the new man born. — Ver. 11. Israel, with his claim to be alone the people of God, was a thorn in the eye of the heathen.

STARKE: Ver. 9. In great distress of heart men often either forget God's promises, or begin in some measure to despair of their fulfillment. — Ver. 10. Then is the cross most lightly borne, when we consider the will of God, and yield ourselves patiently to the trouble. — Ver. 12. The ungodly in their persecution of the saints, always have, doubtless, an evil design, but God knows how nevertheless to turn it to good. — Ver. 13. A great army can accomplish nothing unless God gives it strength. — Ver. 14. And all preparation for war is vain when God would punish. Those who despise Him and his Word are despised by God in return, and given over to the scorn of men.

PFAFF: Ver. 11 ff. The enemies of Christ's kingdom must not think that, because by God's appointment they are permitted to plague the church for a time, this will pass unpunished. The iniquity will be returned upon their own heads. Against God's judgments, when they fall, avails no military preparation, but only the preparation through repentance and prayer.

RIEGER: Even in our Church, and amid the priceless liberty of conscience with which God has blessed us, his kingdom is still everywhere hampered and oppressed by the power and spirit of the world, and one cannot make the least use of discipline, still less discover traces of the kingdom of God in the secular power. But the greater the need the better can the promises come to one's help. If God should even still further and more grievously afflict, this must still be our consolation, that if He breaks down that which He has himself built, He will use all the living stones otherwise for his own purposes. The certainty of the faith of Israel in the Old Testament, and the solidity of all God's promises through the prophets, have served at all times as a support for the Christian faith. Where there is little or no faith in the heart, and men still esteem earthly good very highly, we often hear premature and too sensitive complaints, against which we must testify that there can and will be a still further decay of external prosperity, while yet God will not let his promise fail. Our heart is either lost in the distress and forgets the promise, or it lends an ear to the promise and then thinks there must nothing adverse intervene. It is right to keep promise and threatening both before the eyes.

On chap. v. *The Prince of Peace.*

1. *His coming.*

(a.) In lowly guise, 1 a; humble.

(b.) And yet to the throne, 1 b; glorious.

(c.) Because He was appointed to this from of old, 1 c; eternal.

(d.) At the appointed fullness of time, 2 a; temporal.

2. *His work.*

(a.) To seek and save that which was lost, 2 b.

(b.) To be a shepherd in truth, 3 a.

(c.) To prepare God's kingdom even to the ends of the world, 3 b.

(d.) To give peace to his followers through the protection which He will afford and the bestowment of power, 4.

(e.) To judge the world, 5, 14.

3. *His Congregation.*

(a.) A spiritual congregation. Ver. 6.

(b.) A powerful congregation. Vers. 7, 8.

(c.) A holy congregation, which (α) trusts in God alone (vers. 9, 10); (β) inquires after God's will alone (ver. 11); (γ) fears God alone (vers. 12, 13).

Ver. 1. God counts not but weighs; and the lowly and small in the eye of the world He chooses most fondly. He is a concealed God. His ways reach from the deep to the height. — As David came not from Bethlehem without previous signs, so everything temporal in the kingdom of God has eternal signification. — Kings should consider that they ought not to esteem most highly their arsenals, but their stores of bread, and that those exist for these. — Rulers are at all times by God's grace. Christ's coming is from eternity and to eternity. — It is little to believe that Christ was before the world; salvation begins not until you experience that He is born in the world. — Ver. 2. God's "therefore" is always hard to understand, especially when it goes against our flesh. Blessed he who receives it. God forsakes, but only for a certain time; have patience in the time of drought, his time is best of all. All his ways tend toward new birth; even death. He has forgotten none, and goes after all, even the lost; leaves the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and seeks the one. — Ver. 3. Raise thy head; the Saviour stands ever, and if He veils himself, the cloud is in the dimness of thine eye; he cannot fall. — Although Jesus be thy salvation, thou shouldst not in a childish way drag his nature into the dust, but cherish a holy reverence for his divine majesty. In the name of Christ call upon God; in the name of God cry to Christ; He will certainly hear thee. Wherever thou art He is not far off. Even if thou wert sitting in the abyss, his kingdom reaches thither. But consider that time on earth has an end, seeking may begin too late. — Ver. 4. He gives Himself, therefore gives He peace. In the congregation He, the One, is invisible; his work there is carried on by many hands. A visible head to the congregation is against Scripture. —Ver. 5. Even where He smites, it is only salvation. No Christian should rejoice in the destruction of enemies, but only be thankful for the salvation of his own soul. — Ver. 6. Amid the world must the congregation stand. Flight from the world is contrary to the kingdom of God. Where the maintenance of the spirit and of strength fails, there exists nothing of the true Israel. Again, where grace is sought through human wisdom, and is placed in an outward mechanism of Christianity, rather than in the living, travailing power of God's spirit, there too the true Israel is not. Times of refreshing in the Church come not according to the will and calculation of men, but according to God's will. They cannot be made, but must be prayed for. But for death God is not to blame, but those who would not receive the dew of his Spirit, and would rather remain dry. — Vers. 7, 8. If a preacher would indeed speak the Word of the Spirit, he must know that God's Word, which he proclaims, will triumph. He who believes not speaks as if he spoke not. How much more earnest and diligent in our office should we be, if we always thought that God does not without means carry forward the upbuilding of his kingdom, but has connected this with instruments, with the remnant of Israel, his servants. — Vers. 9, 10. The pride of learning and wisdom also is horses; the pride of self-righteousness and good works is chariots, on which the natural man rides abroad; and if whole communities rest in them and suppose that they are thus justified, they are cities and fortresses rejected of God. — Ver. 11 f. Covetousness and ambition also are idols. How many men ask first these dark idols of their heart, before they inquire after God's will, and thus lose, alas! labor and profit; adulterating also the fountain of grace which had been opened in their hearts. — Ver. 14. In the time of salvation, the idea of "heathen" will no more be conceived as national and historical, but those are heathen who hear not the voice of God, whether by birth they stand within or outside of the congregation.

Michaelis: On ver. 1. "Days" and "eternity" seem to be incompatible, but the Scripture speaks of divine things which it would reveal, in a human way. Hence as we conceive always of a space still beyond the uttermost world-spheres, although it does not exist, so we imagine days and seasons before the world, because we cannot do otherwise. Thus the Apostle also speaks of the days of eternity, and God is called (Dan. vii. 9) the Ancient of Days.

Chrysostom: When He says: His beginnings are from the beginning, from the days of antiquity, He shows his preëxistent nature; but when He says: He will go forth a ruler to feed my people Israel, He shows his temporal birth.

Calvin: "For me will He come forth;" thus God indicates that He intends the destruction of the people only so as to restore them again after a certain time. Hence He calls back to Himself them that believe, and to his plan, as if He would say: So have I rejected you for a season, that you still lie near my heart.

Hengstenberg: God so ordered circumstances connected with the typical choice of David that his human lowliness might appear in the strongest light. It was God who raised him from a keeper of sheep to be a shepherd of the people.

Michaelis: On ver. 2. *Therefore*, because this is the plan of God, first to punish Zion for her sins and then to restore her through the Christ that comes forth out of Bethlehem.

Calvin: Ver. 3. The expression "feed" shows how Christ stands toward his own, the sheep that have been intrusted to him. He does not rule over them like a dreadful tyrant, who oppresses his subjects with fear, but He is a shepherd and cares for his sheep with all the gentleness that could be desired. But since we are surrounded with enemies, the prophet adds: He works with power, that is, with all the power there is in God, all the protection there is in Christ, as soon as there is need to protect the church. We should learn, therefore, to expect from Christ just as much salvation as there is power in God.

Schlier: Ver. 6 ff. Christ's people are a source of blessing everywhere, but where they are opposed they become a lion which none can resist; they are also a victorious people.

Schmieder: That the power of the holy people is a peaceful one, and that only the strength, not the kind of their force is compared to the force of a lion, is proved by what follows.

Michaelis: Christ is a lamb and a lion, cf. Rev. vi. 16.

MICHAELIS: Ver. 9. So did Joshua and David, in order to break up false confidence (Josh. xi. 6 ff.; 2 Sam. viii. 4).

LUTHER: How well has God fulfilled that already with the temporal Israel!

STARKE: Ver. 1. As believers under the Old Testament comforted themselves, amid their afflictions, with the promise of Christ's coming in the flesh, so it becomes us, on whom the end of the world has come, to comfort and strengthen ourselves with the hope of Christ's coming at the last judgment (1 Thes. iv. 16–18). Whatever cities worthily receive Christ, these are his Bethlehem. Although God's throne is very high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly. — Ver. 2. Let him that afflicts afflict, until He comes with the Gospel. Let him who loves happiness submit himself to his government in humility. — Ver. 3. The Gospel gives nourishment to our souls, and glorifies Christ in us. Christ's kingdom of power as well as of grace is and goes everywhere. The Gospel can be detained and hindered by no human power. — Ver. 4. Christ is our peace, because through Him we have peace above us with God, within us in our conscience, around us with other men, and under us against Satan. — Ver. 5. God can doubtless wink at the tyrants for a time; but when they have filled up the measure it will be measured to them again with the measure. — Ver. 6. God scatters his pious ones for this reason also, that through them the seed of the Gospel may be sown also in other places. God has always a little flock left in the Church. True conversion results neither from our own nor from the powers of other men, but from God alone. The Gospel is the dew by which God refreshes the thirsty earth. — Vers. 9, 10. Many things not bad in themselves may become bad by abuse. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual and mighty before God (2 Cor. x. 4). — Ver. 13. Insincere worship also is a kind of idolatry. —Ver. 14. God in kindness calls the sinner to repentance; if he obey not He chastises him in moderation; but if not even this helps, He overwhelms him utterly with his indignation.

PFAFF: Ver. 1. Since Bethlehem, with the other cities of Judæa, has long been destroyed, the Messiah must have been born already. Jesus must reign by his Spirit in our hearts, if we would be a portion of his Israel. — Vers. 2, 3. A beautiful prophecy of the union of Jews and heathen in the New Testament; then they shall form one congregation to the world's end. — Ver. 6 f. Christians who walk in the power of the Saviour, are like a fruitful dew and rain, which fertilizes others also, makes them grow and bear fruit unto the Spirit; they are endowed with a spiritual strength from on high, whereby they may powerfully affect the conscience of men, and triumph gloriously over the kingdom of Satan.

RIEGER: There remains much unexplained in this chapter. We may, however, in that which is clear and certain find our pasture, and have so much reverence for the more difficult parts as to believe that there lies in them also something by which already the faith of others has been strengthened, or of which others after us will have better understanding. — Ver. 1 ff. Christ is here promised particularly as He who should be Lord over Israel, therefore in his kingdom. Where then is his high-priesthood, his redeeming work, and all the rest which is proclaimed of him in the Gospel? All that has its fulfillment and due relations in the kingly rule. For this sets in motion his whole work of redemption with its blessed fruits, and procures its fulfillment for all the righteousness of God. It was the case with the Jews that they in an earthly sense rested on the kingdom alone, and stumbled at the rest; now, it works with many in Christendom almost precisely the other way. — Ver. 2. It is not hard for faith to apprehend that, as Christ was once born at Bethlehem, as regards his person, so also he, in his kingdom, may once appear as the shepherd of nations, born through so many pangs and sighs of all the faithful, and may bring everything to the end proposed in the counsel of God.

QUANDT: Ver. 1. Out of the place which is too small to be an independent member, goes forth the head. Not the present Bethlehem, whose poor inhabitants support themselves by the preparation of mementoes for the pilgrims, out of the stones and shells of the Dead Sea, but a converted Christian soul is now the true birth-place of the Redeemer. — Ver. 3. He who has the Messiah for a shepherd finds in Him both pasture and protection. With Him will the congregation dwell, not roam abroad any longer (cf. Am. viii. 11). — Ver. 6. The blessings which Christianity has brought to the world are not to be counted. — Ver. 7. Not to the souls, but the sins of the nations will Israel be terrible; for the peace which the Messiah gives is in its nature warfare against sin. — Ver. 10. Cities which are fortresses fall under the judgments of God, that confidence in them may fall also. — Ver. 14. It is God's way to do wonders with broken reeds. Not until He has washed Israel in the sharp lye of his judgments, and taken from him all in which he placed his vain hopes, is he a suitable instrument for God, to execute his vengeance on the nations through attestation of the word.

[DR. PUSEY: On iv. 1. God's promises, goodness, truth, fail not. He withdraweth his Presence from those who receive Him not; only to give Himself to those who will receive Him. Mercy is the end and sequel of chastisement. Micah then joins, on this great prophecy of future mercy to the preceding woe, as its issue in the order of God's will. — Ver. 2. In Micah's time not one people, scarcely some poor fragments of the Jewish people, went up to worship God at Zion, to call to remembrance his benefits, to learn of Him. Those who should thereafter worship Him, should be many nations. — They came not making bargains with God (as some now would), what they should be taught, that He should reveal to them nothing transcending reason, nothing exceeding or contradicting their notions of God; they do not come with reserves, that God should not take away *this* or *that* error, or should not disclose anything of his incomprehensibleness. They come in holy simplicity, to learn whatever He will condescend to tell them; in holy confidence, that He, the Infallible Truth, will teach them infallibly. — No one ever saw or could imagine two human beings, in whom the grace of God had unfolded itself in exactly the same way. Each saint will have his distinct beauty around the throne. But then each will have learnt *of his ways*, in a different proportion or degree. — Ver. 3. The fathers had indeed a joy, which we have not, that wars were not between Christians; for although "just wars are lawful," war cannot be on both sides just; very few wars have not, on both sides, what is against the spirit of the Gospel. For, except where there is exceeding wickedness on one side, or peril of further evil, the words of our Lord would hold good, in public as well as private. *I*

say unto you that ye resist not evil. — Ver. 10. God's judgments, or purifying trials, or visitation of his saints, hold their way, until their end be reached. They who suffer cannot turn them aside; they who inflict them cannot add to them or detain them. — There [in Babylon, "in tumult, and din, and unrest, and the distractions of this life"] shall it [the backslidden and chastened soul] be delivered, like the poor Prodigal, who came to himself in a far country, when worn out by its hard service. Even then it must not despair, but remember, with him, its Father's house, the Heavenly Jerusalem. Its pains within or without, whereby it is brought back, are travail pains. Though all is dark, it must not say, *I have no Counsellor*. For its Redeemer's name is *Counsellor*, "one Counsellor of a thousand." "Thine Intercessor never dies." Out of the very depths of misery will the Divine mercy draw thee.

Dr. Pusey: Ch. v. 7 (Eng. Vers.). In the Gospel and the grace of Christ there are both, gentleness and might; softness, as *of the dew*, might, as *of a lion*. For, "wisdom reacheth from one end to another *mightily;* and *sweetly* doth she order all things."[1] — Ver. 11. The church shall not need the temptation of human defenses; for God shall fence her in on every side. Great cities too, as the abode of luxury, and sin, of power and pride, and, mostly, of cruelty, are chiefly denounced as the objects of God's anger. Babylon stands as the emblem of the whole city of the world or of the devil, as opposed to God. "The first city was built by Cain; Abel and the other saints *had no continuing city* here."

[1] Wisd. viii. 1.

Matthew Henry: Ch. iv. 2. Where we come to worship God, we come to be taught of Him. Those may comfortably expect that God will teach them who are firmly resolved by his grace to do as they are taught. — Ver. 5. Then peace is a blessing indeed, when it strengthens our resolution to cleave to the Lord. — Ver. 12. When men are made use of as instruments of Providence in accomplishing its purposes, it is very common for them to intend one thing, and for God to intend quite the contrary. — Ver. 13. When God has conquering work for his people to do, He will furnish them with strength and ability for it, will make the *horns iron* and the *hoofs brass;* and when He does so, they must exert the power He gives them and execute the commission; even the daughter of Zion must *arise and thresh.*

Ch. v. 2 (Eng. Vers.). A relation to Christ will magnify those that are *little in the world.* — Ver. 5. When God has work to do He will not want fitting instruments to do it with; and when He pleases He can do it by *a few;* He needs not raise thousands, but seven or eight principal men may serve the turn, if God be with them.

SECOND DIVISION.

FOURTH DISCOURSE.

Chapters VI.–VII.

Chap. vi. 1 Hear ye, I pray, what Jehovah saith:
Rise thou, wage a controversy before the mountains,
And let the hills hear thy voice!

2 Hear, ye mountains, Jehovah's controversy,
And ye immovable foundations of the earth!
For Jehovah hath a controversy with his people,
And with Israel will he dispute.

3 My people, what have I done unto thee?
And wherein have I wearied thee?
Testify against me.
4 For [1] I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,
And out of the house of bondage I redeemed thee;
And sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
5 My people, remember now
What Balak consulted,
The king of Moab,
And what answer was given him,
By Balaam, son of Beor;
From Shittim to Gilgal;
That thou mayest know the righteousness of Jehovah.

6 With what shall I come into the presence of Jehovah,

Bow down unto God on high?
Shall I come into his presence with burnt offerings,
With calves of a year old?
7 Doth Jehovah delight in thousands of rams,
In ten thousand streams of oil?
Shall I give my first born for my transgression,[2]
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
8 He hath told thee, O man, what is good;
And what[3] doth Jehovah require of thee,
But to do justly,
And love mercy,
And walk humbly with thy God?

9 Jehovah's voice calls to the city,
And wisdom will see thy name.[4]
Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it!
10 Are there yet in the house of the wicked
Treasures of wickedness,
And the lean Ephah, accursed?
11 Can I be pure with the wicked balances,
And with the bag of deceitful weights?
12 Her rich men are full of violence,
And her inhabitants speak lies,
And their tongue is deception in their mouth.
13 And I also will smite thee with deadly wounds,
Laying thee waste on account of thy sins.
14 Thou shalt eat and not be satisfied,
And thy emptiness [shall remain] in thee;
And thou shalt remove, and shalt not rescue,
And what thou dost rescue I will give to the sword.
15 Thou shalt sow, and not reap;
Thou shalt tread olives, and not anoint thee with oil,
And must, and not drink wine.
16 And they diligently keep the statutes of Omri,
And all the works of the house of Ahab;
And ye walk in their counsels,
That I may make thee an astonishment,
And her inhabitants a hissing:
And the reproach of my people ye shall bear.

CHAP. vii. 1 Woe is me! for I am become
As the gatherings of the harvest,
As the gleanings of the vintage:
There is no cluster to eat;
For a first-ripe fig my soul longs.
2 Perished is the godly man out of the earth;
And upright among men there is none:
They all lie in wait for blood,
Each his brother they hunt with a net.
3 For evil both hands are active;
The prince asketh, and the judge [judgeth] for reward,
And the great man — he speaketh the desire of his soul,
And they wrest it.
4 The best of them is as a prickly bush,
And the most upright worse than a thorn hedge:
The day[5] of thy watchmen and of thy visitation cometh;
Then shall be their perplexity.
5 Trust ye not in a friend,
Confide not in an associate;

From her that lieth in thy bosom
Keep the doors of thy mouth.
6 For son despiseth father,
Daughter riseth up against her mother,
Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
A man's enemies are the people of his house.

7 And I, to Jehovah will I look,
I will wait for the God of my salvation;
My God will hear me.
8 Rejoice not, O mine enemy, over[6] me;
When I have fallen, I arise;
When I sit in darkness,
Jehovah is a light to me.

9 The indignation of Jehovah I will bear,
For I have sinned against him,
Until he plead my cause, and maintain my right:
He will bring me forth to the light;
I shall see his righteousness.
10 And my enemy shall see,
And shame shall cover her,
Her who saith to me:
Where is Jehovah thy God?
My eyes will look upon her,
Now she shall be trodden down
As the mire in the streets.
11 A day for building thy fence walls:
That day shall the statute be far removed.
12 That day, unto thee shall they come
Even from Assyria, and the cities of Egypt;[7]
And from Egypt even unto the river;
And [to] sea from sea,
And [from] mountain to mountain.
13 And the land will be desolate
On account of its inhabitants,
Because of the fruit of their doings.

14 Feed thy people with thy rod,
The flock of thy possession,
Dwelling alone,[8]
In the forest, in the midst of Carmel;
They shall feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.

15 As in the days of thy coming from the land of Egypt,
Will I show to them marvellous things.
16 The nations shall see and be ashamed,
Of all their might;
They shall place their hand on their mouth,
Their ears will be deaf.
17 They shall lick dust like the serpent,
As creeping on the earth;
They shall tremble forth out of their hiding-places,
Unto Jehovah our God they shall come with dread,
And shall fear because of thee.

18 Who is a God like thee,
That forgiveth iniquity,
And passeth over transgression

For the remnant of his possession?
He holdeth not his anger forever,
For he delighteth in mercy.
19 He will again have compassion on us,
He will trample on our iniquities,
And cast into the depths of the sea all their sins.
20 Thou wilt give truth to Jacob,
Mercy to Abraham,
Which thou hast sworn to our fathers,
From the days of ancient time.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 4.—כִּי. Dr. Kleinert renders: Is it, possibly, that I brought thee up, etc.; *ist etwa, dass*, u. s. w. This is spirited but savors too much, perhaps, of modern rhetoric.—Tr.]

[2 Ver. 7.—פִּשְׁעִי and חַטָּאת are regarded by many as used by metonomy for "sin-offering," "expiation." Perhaps however they are quite as well taken to be adverb. acc. (Gesen. § 118, 3); and at all events, the rendering of the Eng. Vers. gives the sense: and so Zunz.—Tr.]

[3 Ver. 8.—Our author with Hitzig, disregarding the accentuation, makes וּמָה also dependent on הִגִּיד: "and what Jehovah seeks of thee;" and then translates כִּי אִם: "nothing but." Maurer's refutation of Hitzig at this point is harsh and petulant, but effectual.—Tr.]

[4 Ver. 9.—Kleinert, with Maurer and many others, inverts the order of these words, with the advantage of thus securing an obvious agreement in gender between יִרְאֶה and its subj., and a thought at least equally appropriate. But as there is some doubt about the meaning,—"look out for," *circumspectare*, *circumspicere*—thus ascribed to רָאָה, And as "wisdom" may very well stand for "the wise man," it seems preferable to adopt the simplest translation, following the very order of the Hebrew words. The Exegetical note will give several of the many renderings which have been proposed.—Tr.]

[5 Chap. vii. 4.—Kleinert treats יוֹם as an acc. of time, translating:

In the day of thy seers,
When thy visitation cometh,

and in the next member would have תִּהְיֶה in the second pers. masc.: Thou shalt be ensnared by them.—Tr.]

[6 Ver. 8.—I do not think the לִי "pleonastic" here, but rather as giving the ground of the hostile "joy."—Tr.]

[7 Ver. 12.—מָצוֹר, properly signifying, "bulwark," or "fortification," "strength," is here almost certainly used of Egypt, probably with a play on the name of the latter. Pusey: "The name *Matsor*, which he gives to Egypt, modifying its ordinary dual name *Mitzraim*, is meant at once to signify "Egypt" [Is. xix. 6; xxxvii. 25], and to mark the strength of the country."—Tr.]

[8 Ver. 14.—Kleinert changes the punctuation, putting a period after c, and then reads:—

In the forest in the midst of Carmel may they feed,
In Bashan, etc.

"Dwelling alone" is in either case parenthetic, but it seems just as well to connect what immediately follows with the "feed," etc., in the first member, as is done above.—Tr.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL

Leaving the concrete sketches of history, the public reproofs, and the historical prediction, the prophet rises to the height of the idea woven through the whole course of history, and represents the relation between the God of Israel and his people, the past condition the present complications and the future solution, under the figure of a suit-at-law.

In accordance with this fundamental character, the discourse has no special historical reference, but takes, as we may say, a universal position. We must, to be sure, perceive, with Caspari, that Israel, charged by the prophet with backsliding, freely grants its guilt and is ready to atone for it (vi. 6 a); that it is disposed to clear itself by numerous sacrifices (vi. 6 b), not however through hearty relinquishment of its pride, unrighteousness and oppression (vi. 8–10 ff.). But that we should by these traits (in contrast with the preceding discourses, as having fallen within the time of Hezekiah's predecessors), be here necessarily brought down to the first years of Hezekiah, when a general sense of sin and the favorable disposition for the orderly restoration of Jehovah's worship may have existed in the higher strata of the people, while the mass still strove against the ethical portion of the law, is disproved by the contents of the section, ch. vii. 1 ff. (cf. vi. 16). There we find no word of any difference between the good disposition of the great and the stupidity of the multitude, but, rather, the description runs completely parallel to that in ch. iii. Nor is there otherwise any solid support for maintaining the date of the whole to be either earlier or later than for chaps. i.–v., and we must be content with saying, that in a completely similar situation, this concluding discourse distinguishes itself only by its peculiar rhetorical character from the former portion of the book. This is true in respect to matter, inasmuch as the subject is not particular manifestations of present sin, but the sins of the whole people, and not particular moments of the future, but judgment and salvation in their spiritual nature; and in respect to form, inasmuch as it is not directly parænetic or eschatological, but lyrical and of the nature of a psalm. It closes

the book of Micah very much as Hab. iii. and Is. xl.–lxvi. close those books, and as Rom. xi. 33–36 the Jewish historical exposition of the Epistle to the Romans.

In its plan also this peculiarity of the closing address appears. It falls into three parts, and the fundamental number which prevails is (apart from the *introitus* and the *transitus*) 13. The scheme is as follows: —

a. The *introitus*, vi. 1, 2 (seven lines). Then
 I. The first stage of the suit (vi. 3–8); and
  1. Vers. 3–5. God's complaint (thirteen lines).
  2. Vers. 6–8. Israel's anxious reply (thirteen lines).
 II. Second stage of the suit (vi. 9–vii. 8); and
  1. vi. 9–16. God's reproof (twenty-six lines).
  2. vii. 1–6. Israel's complaint (twenty-six lines).
b. The *transitus*, vii. 7, 8 (seven lines); and following upon this, —
 III. The closing psalm: humiliation, confidence, and praise, vii. 9–12 (13+26+13 lines).

Introitus, chap. vi., vers. 1, 2. **Hear ye now**; thus begins, like the opening discourse, i., ii., the closing address also; hear ye **what Jehovah saith**, *dicturus est*, namely, to me, the prophet. **Arise, bring a suit toward the mountains!** In the name of Jehovah, and as his advocate, should the prophet enter into the controversy with the people, and utter the complaint so loud that the mountains, which, as appears from the following clause, **and the hills shall hear thy voice**, and from ver. 2, are present as witnesses of the trial (cf. Deut. xxxii. 1; Is. i. 2), may murmur with the echo. The explanation, bring a suit against the mountains, accuse the mountains, is senseless in itself, and therefore אֶת must be taken as a sign of direction, as Judg. xix. 18; Is. lxvi. 14.

Ver. 2. The prophet, following the command, calls out to the mountains: **hear, ye mountains, Jehovah's cause, and ye unchangeable** — from their unchangeableness Israel might have taken an example; Balaam had long before called the rocks of Canaan changeless (Num. xxiv. 21) — **ye foundations of the earth**, that cannot be shaken, but that should now tremble before the solemn message, and weighty judgment of Jehovah (Is. xxiv. 18). **For Jehovah hath a suit against his people** (cf. Hos. iv. 1), **and with Israel will he have a settlement.**

First Stage, vers. 3–8. — Vers. 3–5. *The Complaint.* Jehovah speaks not with the thunder of the law, but with the much sharper cordiality of wounded love. **My people,** thou that belongest to me alone, brought up by me, **what have I done to thee, and wherein have I wearied thee?** The Hithpael, "to have a settlement," was not without significance. He is in earnest, if Israel has aught against Him, to hear it. Jehovah might have wearied Israel by over rigorous requirements (Is. xliii. 23), or by unfulfilled promises (Jer. ii. 31). But much more should the expression recall how Israel has wearied the Lord (Is. xliii. 24). **Answer me!** properly, as the בְּ instead of the customary acc. shows: defend thyself against Me, make reply to my charge (Job xxxi. 35).

Ver. 4. God's language continues in a tone of the deepest irony: **Is it in that I led thee up out of the land of Egypt** (Am. ii. 10), **and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage?** (cf. Ex. xx. 2) — plur. conc. for abstr., Ewald, § 179; **and that I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam?** With special fondness the sacred writers bring forward, when they would impress upon the people the goodness of the Lord, his earliest deeds, and, above all, those connected with their deliverance from Egypt, because through that Israel became his peculiar possession (Ps. cxiv.), and also in it, as the *actus primus* of his gracious choice of the people, there lay enfolded, so far as regards its direction and shape, all the subsequent development; all the following acts of grace are only confirmations of the first purpose of grace.

Ver. 5 glances at these tokens of love in the history of the planting of Israel until their arrival in the Holy Land: **My people, remember now, what counsel Balak took, the king of Moab, and what answer was given him by Balaam, Beor's son**; cf. Num. xxii. 24. "It was no light thing that Israel, ready to enter into the Holy Land, is sent forward, not cursed by him, but rather blest by God through him, to his great and arduous task. The curse would, through the superstition of many of the Israelites, have discouraged them, and inspired their superstitious foes with confidence. So much the more must the blessing have raised the spirits of the people, as it indicated that the Lord had so completely blessed them in the eyes of all nations, that even enemies who would curse were obliged to bless them." Caspari. The little clause: **from Shittim to Gilgal**, is a new object to זְכָר: Remember what occurred from Shittim to Gilgal, *i. e.*, between the first station after Balaam's (Num. xxv. 1) blessing and the first station on the soil of the Holy Land (Josh. iv. 19). Remember this, **that thou mayest know the covenant grace** (properly: the righteousnesses) **of Jehovah.** Jehovah's deeds of mercy are called exhibitions of righteousness, inasmuch as after the original establishment of the covenant with Abraham, or (as the case may be) of the covenant of the law on Sinai, all following grace was only fulfillment of what had been before promised, *i. e.*, צְדָקָה. — לְמַעַן *cum inf.* as Am. ii. 7.

Ver. 6–8. *Reply and Decision.* As Jehovah addressed primarily the prophet, so the discourse of the people is directed immediately to him, standing as he does between God and the people. He is the mouth of God toward the people (Hos. i. 1; Deut. v. 5 ff., cf. Ex. iv. 16). Israel, in so far as it is really such, cannot close its ears to the voice of truth (cf. John xviii. 37), hence owns itself guilty without parley, and asks only after the way of expiation. **Wherewith shall I meet Jehovah?** קִדֵּם, to meet with gifts, in order to gratify any one, and to render to him honor and duty (Ps. cv. 2; Deut. xxiii. 5). Wherewith **bow myself?** בַּמֶּה belongs to both clauses, and "to bow one's self," אִכַּף, imperf. Niph., from כָּפַף, Olsh., § 265, e., is, like the meeting Him, an expression of respect, which is appropriate **before the God on high**, who looks down on men, and in whose sight they are as grasshoppers (Is. xl. 22). **Shall I meet Him with burnt offerings?** That is the first thought with men who look at what is external; thither they naturally turn to fill the "aching void" in the soul with outward things, and as naturally also to try to expiate the sins which spring from the heart against God, according to the outwardly written letter: work-righteousness, and the idolatry of the letter. **With calves of a year old?** Not as if these alone were proper to be offered (Caspari, Hitzig, against Lev. xxii.,

xxvii.), but because they were accounted as the most important (Lev. ix. 3).

Ver. 7. **Hath Jehovah pleasure in thousands (hecatombs) of rams? in myriads of oil-brooks?** (cf. Job xx. 17). The questions, as the connection shows, are not rhetorical (Luther), but express the good resolution, the spirit of anxious and earnest inquiry: if so, then we would fain offer them to Him. Libations of oil were an essential element of the meat-offering, and the thank-offering (Lev. ii. 1, 15; vii. 12). The climax culminates with the latter half of ver. 7: **Shall I give up my first-born, the best and last that I have, as a sin-offering for myself?** As elsewhere חטאת and אשם, so here פשע stands, the sin for the offering which is brought as its equivalent. **The fruit,** offspring, **of my body, as an atonement for my soul?** Cf. Deut. vii. 13. The external disposition, as it is of heathen origin and nature, so it proceeds, even to the final consequence, to atone for sin by sin, even by murder. Thus the kings of Moab sacrificed their first-born (2 K. iii. 27). According to Israelitish principles the firstlings belonged naturally to God, so that the offering might not once have been a strange gift for God, but the law directed that the first born of men should be ransomed (Ex. xiii. 13); it demands a disposition most completely ready to offer all, but not the external act (Gen. xxii.). And to this direction of the entire life, which alone gives all its moral value and acceptableness with God to each particular deed, the prophet also points in what immediately follows.

Ver. 8. **He,** namely, God (Hitzig and Hesselberg, indefinitely: they), **hath made known to thee, O man, what is good.** Ye know, why do ye ask? Is it not an idle question, contrived that, instead of the answer, an escape for thy conscience should be offered thee? **And what Jehovah seeketh of thee** (cf. Luke xiii. 7). Since מה, repeated in the two preceding clauses, is used in the sense of "nothing" as in the rhetorical question, Eccl. i. 3, it may be followed by כי אם, *nisi:* **nothing else** does Jehovah seek of thee, **but to do right,** *suum cuique,* **and love mercy,** the disposition from which flows the beneficent discharge of the duties of the law (Prov. xxi. 21), a contrast to ch. iii. 2; **and walk humbly** (on the const. cf. Ewald, § 280, c. [*Text. and Gram. on Ob.* 4]) **before thy God** (cf. 1 Sam. xv. 22; Hos. vi. 6). Micah's accurate acquaintance with the whole Pentateuch, which stands out through these chapters especially, appears here also, and here in a way doubly important for historical criticism, since it involves Deuteronomy: the passage referred to as God's word connects itself exactly, in matter and form, with Deut. x. 12; cf. also Deut. xvi. 12; viii. 14).

Ver. 9–vii. 6. *Second Stage.* Ver. 9–16. *The Judgment in the Case.* **The voice of Jehovah,** that judges mightily (Am. i. 2), **calls concerning the city,** *i. e.,* Jerusalem, the representative of the sins of the people, i. 5 (לְ as Ob. i. 1); **and after** the true **wisdom,** which has in itself the pledge of its prosperous issue and result (Job v. 12; vi. 13), **thy name looks out,** the holy manifestation of thyself in the judgment (Is. xxx. 27: cf. for the sense of the phrase, Ps. xiv. 2. — Benary (*De Levirutu Hebr.*, p. 70), Keil: Wisdom has regard to thy name. Caspari: O, what wisdom, if one sees thy name. In the last-named writer see also many other explanations of the passage. [Cf. Text. and Gram. note.] — The sudden variation of the person is common in all the prophets; and thus the discourse turns back again here in what immediately follows to the people: **Perceive the scourge,** the judgment appointed by Jehovah, here by metonomy for the discourse which treats of it, as in Is. x. 5, 24, for the Assyrian power which executes it, **and who hath appointed it!** שמע has a double construction, first with the acc. obj., then with an object-clause; מטה is gen. comm., not merely masc., cf. Num. xvii. 22. He has appointed the rod whose law is continually broken. The rod itself is not described until ver. 13 ff.; the reason for it is first given, ver. 10 ff.

Ver. 10. **Are there yet,** he asks (אִשׁ, *more Aram.* for יֵשׁ, 2 Sam. xiv. 19) **in the house of the wicked the treasures of wickedness,** gained by wickedness, as *e. g.,* by what is immediately indicated; **yea, the lean Epha, accursed?** The epha of leanness is the false measure of grain, forbidden in the law (Deut. xxv. 14 ff.), too small, contrasted with שְׁלֵמָה, the right measure, which, as opposed to the crime before us, is called (Lev. xix. 36) an epha of righteousness (Caspari). This connection shows that in the interrogation in the first member, the point is, not that former sins have not been expiated by the restoration of ill-gotten treasures, but that still new sins are ever heaping up, and thus God's requirement in ver. 8 is ever broken anew.

Ver. 11. In the same sense he proceeds, looking back to Deut. xxv. 19 ff.: **Can I** — as much as to say: can one now; an exemplification in the first person, common also in English (cf. Glassii, *Phil. Sac.*, p. 898 f.) — **remain pure with the balance of wickedness, and with the bag with weights of deceit?** The sinners dream that by their offerings before God they shall stand pure, in spite of their daily repeated sins; that is the faulty moral apprehension which the prophet would destroy. The sins of trade and exchange here named may have been particularly rife with the Jewish national character, but they stand palpably representative of all injustice (cf. 1 Thess. iv. 6).

Ver. 12. Over these instances this verse, by the relative applying to the city, reaches back to ver. 9: **Her rich men are full of violence.** Such relative connections (אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׁירֶיהָ) have the character of an exclamation, or direct call, cf. Am. vi. 3 ff.; Mic. iii. 3 (*quos ego!*). **And her inhabitants speak lies, and their tongue is deception in their mouth.** As this array of their sins rests on the Psalms, so that of threatened penalties (ver. 13 ff.), rests on the Pentateuch (Lev. xvi. 25 f.; Deut. xxviii. 39 f.). **And so also I,** as intimated in ver. 9, have made sick the blows upon thee, *i. e.,* **I smite thee mortally;** cf. for the expression, Nah. iii. 19; for the matter, Is. i.; Micah, i. 9; **with devastation** (inf. abs., probably gerund, Gesenius, § 131, 2; the form, Gesenius, § 67, Rem. 10) **on account of thy sins.**

Ver. 14. **Thou shalt eat and not be satisfied;** cf. for the fulfillment, Jer. lii. 6; Hag. i. 6; **and thy emptiness shall remain in thy bowels! Thou shalt carry away,** flee with thy goods and family, **and not save; and what thou shalt save, will I give to the sword.** Cf. Jer. l. 37; xlii. 16.

Ver. 15. **Thou shalt sow . . . not drink wine.** The enemy shall reap thy harvests and plunder thy stores (Am. v. 11, cf. the reference in Is. lxii. 8 ff.).

In ver. 16, finally, sin and punishment are once

more briefly grouped together: **Yea, they observe** —instead of the customary Kal, he designedly chooses the strongest form, Hithpael, the reflexive of Piel (Jonah ii. 9), to express the carefulness of the observance (Hitzig) — **the statutes of Omri and all the doings of the house of Ahab**, the Baal worship (1 K. xvi. 31 f.) and all the other abominations (*e. g.*, 1 K. xxii. 27), by which this abandoned dynasty had from the beginning disgraced the ungodly throne (Ps. xciv. 20) of the kingdom of Israel; human statutes instead of God's Word (Lev. xx. 23), such as indeed had under Ahaz broken into Judah also (2 K. xvi. 3; 2 Chr. xxviii. 2). **And so ye walk in their counsels, that** (ironically; the actual results of the corruption represented instead of the desired fruits of their luxurious prosperity, as Hos. viii. 4) **I may make thee** (למען, c. inf. as ver. 5) **a ruin** (iii. 12), **and her** (Jerusalem's) **inhabitants a hissing; and the disgrace of my people — ye shall bear it**; the present generation is ripe for the curse, which the Lord had cast forth in the law for the future of his people (Is. lxv. 7).

Chap. vii. vers. 1–6. *The Lamentation of the People.* As appears from the subjoined transitus, ver. 7, and especially ver. 8, where the holy commonwealth is manifestly thought of as speaking, the speaker here is the prophet, not so much as prophet, but as organ of the ideal person, the true Israel; like Is. xlix. 1 ff.; lx. 1 ff., where the prophet identifies himself with the true Israel, personified throughout ch. xl.–lxvi. under the name of the Servant of Jehovah. Israel must confess that God, in his bitter complaint (ch. vi. 9 ff.), is just. In the later prophets this view is presented in a still more concrete form, when they personify the true Israel in the angelic character of the *maleach* (messenger) who represents the people before God, and receives from God the words which He has to communicate through the prophets to the members of the people, his members (Zech. i. 12, 14). Daniel, having shaped this personification of the ideal Israel to the image of a heavenly Son of Man, to whom the dominion of the world is assigned (vii. 13 ff., cf. ver. 27), and having given both to this heavenly and to the earthly Israel the name of the Messiah (ix. 25 f.), furnishes the basis for the New Testament development, in which Christ appears on the one hand as a name of the people of Israel (Heb. xi. 26, cf. ver. 25), then as the Son of Man descended from heaven, and He in whom all the promises given for Israel are combined. — **Woe is me!** thus begins the lament (cf. Job x. 15), **for I am become as a gathering of the harvest, as a gleaning in the vintage.** Were these words the words of the prophet, the sense would be obscure, and hence from ancient times the conjecture has been proposed, that the two substantives were to be regarded as participles; like gatherers of the fruit, like gleaners of the vintage. But the pointing by ŏ under Aleph, utterly precludes this view, which has also been rejected by the most exact interpreters, from Ben Izaac down to Hitzig. Caspari: It has happened with me as with one who at the harvest time seeks early figs. But neither does היה mean "it has occurred to me," for the passage Is. i. 9, quoted by Caspari, proves nothing like this, nor does this latter special limitation, the seeking of early figs, lie indicated at all in the general designation קיץ (Am. viii. 1); but if figs and grapes are meant at all, the thought that the prophet finds none would be very unsuitably expressed by the harvest, where they find many figs, and by the gleaning of the vintage, where they still find some clusters left. A clear understanding results here only from the position before assumed, that the personified Israel himself speaks through the prophet: I am become like gleanings of the harvest (the plural stands for symmetry with the following plur. *tantum*, עללת), as gleanings of the vintage, *i. e.*, I am so entirely gleaned that **there is no cluster any more to eat; for an early fig**, which was particularly relished (Jer. xxiv. 2; Is. xxviii. 4), **my soul pants.**

Ver. 2. What Israel intends by the clusters, and early figs, which he would so gladly find with him, but which have been snatched away (cf. Is. xxxiii. 4), appears from this verse; **gone is the pious man**; (collect. for the pious, חסידים, possessors of the *chesed*, the grace, who by their conduct show themselves worthy of the grace, and who taken together are the true Israel (Ps. xvi. 10) — **from the earth, and an upright man is no more to be found.** It lies in the nature of prophecy that it should extend its immediate horizon over the whole world. And in fact, when the righteous have already died out of Israel, how should it be with the heathen who have not God's word? (Luke xxiii. 31). **All lie in wait for blood** (Ps. x. 8 ff.), **each for his neighbor they hunt with the net.** In the phrase "each for his neighbor," which has usually a quite general signification: *alter alterum*, there lies here a special emphasis; those who lie in wait for each other are brethren, creatures of one God, sons of one forefather (Mal. ii. 10), and bound by the law to love each the other as himself (Lev. xix. 18).

Ver. 3. The first three words form a parallel to the sentence just closed: **for evil the hands are stout**, and they are not with some Rabbins, Rosenmüller, and Ewald, to be connected with the following. להיטיב stands for *verbo finito*, as v. 1; Prov. xix. 8; 2 Chron. xi. 2, and היטיב in the intrans. sense, to be joyful, glad, spirited (cf. ii. 7; Prov. xv. 13; Gen. iv. 7); cf. the parallel sentence: their feet run to evil (Is. lix. 7). It would be still more suitable to the primary meaning of היטיב as well as to the connection with what follows, to propose as the sense of the phrase: upon evil they look favorably, are friendly to it; but then we should have, instead of כפים, hands, לב or פעם. Hitzig: only the evil do they practice well; which is the same as: for the evil alone have they hands, while if anything good is to be done, they have none for it. But this sense does not lie in his translation, which itself breaks down upon the על. Cocceius (*Lex.*, p. 304): *Super malo sunt manus ad bonum faciendum*, i. e., *fingunt et plasmant malum, ut bonum videatur.* Similarly Umbreit, Keil, Caspari. But this sense היטיב nowhere has. Hence the two last offer also the alternative translation, to do it well; which coincides with Hitzig's. The corruption rests on a compromise of the ruling classes, and so on the worst moral vileness; "the foundations are destroyed" (Ps. xi. 3); **the prince demands** some deed of violence, דם (ver. 2), **and the judge for a price** from the princes **may be bought** (or says: For a price!); **and the high-born: he speaks out the desire** (Prov. x. 13; the other sense: "ruin," destroys the connection). **of his soul; and together they extort it; each one gives his part, so**

that a עֲבוּת**, a dark web of intrigues, a snare** for the victim, results.

Ver. 4. Their good man, *i. e.*, **the best among them** (Ewald, 313, c), **is like a thorn, the most upright worse than a hedge** (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 6). That will all be proved, for **in the day of thy seers**, in the *jom Jehovah*, God's judgment **day**, which all thy prophets (elsewhere rather partic. Kal צֹפִים, Jer. vi. 17; Ezek. iii. 17) have so constantly proclaimed, **when thy visitation comes** (this sentence is likewise a more definite limitation, a second *stat. absol.* to *jom*, cf. Ps. lvi. 4; lxxxviii. 2) **then wilt thou be ensnared by them.** According to the suffix in the previous member, תהיה is not third fem. (then will be her perplexity), but a second masc. in the address to the people, and the sense (cf. Is. xxii. 5) is, that Zion, in the day of God's judgment, cannot free herself from the machinations of those seemingly respectable men who are really thorn hedges, but will be caught as a victim (cf. Gen. xxii. 13; Nah. i. 10.)

Ver. 5. From that it follows that now what is otherwise a token of the greatest moral decay, in a land, must be practiced of design and for self-defense: **trust not in a friend**; "he takes no notice of the fact that those to whom he calls are themselves, in the same relations, without love and fidelity" (Caspari). **Rely not on the most trusted; from her who lies in thy bosom,** thy wife (Deut. xiii. 7), **keep the doors of thy mouth.** "The prophet mentions only the treachery of the wife against her husband, because his discourse is addressed to the men as *genus potius;* because the wife can much more easily prove treacherous to the husband than *vice versa,* since the man stands preëminently in relations which allow treachery; and because, finally, the wife is subject to the man, and so in a higher degree pledged to fidelity than he (?)" — Caspari.

Ver. 6. Friendship and love are no longer securities for confidence, for even the relation of natural piety is lost in an unnatural perversion: **the son makes a fool of his father** [?] (Deut. xxxii. 15; Jer. xiv. 21); **the daughter stands up as a witness against her mother** (קוּם בְּ, as Ps. xxvii. 12); **the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and the man's enemies are his servants.** אַנְשֵׁי בֵיתוֹ, "men of his house" are not his relations, who live in his house, but the company of servants (Gen. xvii. 23–27; xxxix. 14). The connection of ver. 4 with 5 and 6 shows how appropriately this description is again employed (Matt. x. 35 ff.; Luke xii. 53) as a sign of the last days (cf. also Matt. xxiv. 10 ff.).

Vers. 7, 8. *Transitus.* The true Israel shudders not in this time of need. He knows well that for him the promise cannot be broken, and that through the confusion of the judgment God's light must break. By the וַאֲנִי as also the long preserved space between vers. 8 and 9 shows, these two verses are appended as a conclusion to the foregoing, while yet they constitute by their contents and psalm-like tone, — a structural peculiarity, common to the prophets — the transition to what follows: **but as for me I look out for God.** Both aspects of the spirit which speaks in the prophets appear in this "looking out," in that he both as prophet looks out for, strives to anticipate, the fortunes of the future, the coming of God for salvation, and also as the spirit of the true people of God confidently trusts in this coming help (Ps. v. 4; Heb. ii. 1). Prophecy and faith are correlatives. **I will wait,** the Opt. indicates that the word is an exhortation to his own soul (Ps. xlii. 12), **for the God of my salvation,** the God on whom my salvation rests; this also being a psalm-tone (Ps. xxvii. 9). **My God will hear me, and** his hearing is an active, effectual hearing.

Ver. 8. Hence results immediately the apostrophe to the enemy, the world-power which (iv. 10) is called Babylon, to which the chastisement of Israel is committed: She must not regard this condition of chastisement as a perpetual thing. **Rejoice not, my enemy;** the pleonastic לִי, which strengthens the emphasis, is likewise appropriate to the psalm style (Ps. xxv. 2, *et sæpe*).[1] **For if I fall, I rise again,** I fall only to rise again. — The conditionality gains energy by the parataxis without particles (Prov. xviii. 22; Ewald, 357, 6). The second כִּי, as is shown also by the change of tenses, is temporal and not for additional confirmation. **When I sit in darkness,** a common figure for the affliction caused by God's judgments (Is. viii. 25; ix. 1; lx. 1 ff.); **then is Jehovah my light** (Ps. xxvii. 1); and this light cannot remain concealed, but must actively manifest itself.

Vers. 9, 10. With this transitus the psalmody is begun which sounds on through the whole *lyric period* which follows (vers. 9–20). This describes (in the form of a prayer, with hope and supplication, announcing and celebrating the completion of God's doings with his people), the coming of the kingdom of light after the darkness, and is thus the fulfillment of the final clause of ver. 8; when I sit in darkness then is Jehovah my light. The position is an ideal one. As ver. 1, Israel, on account of his deficiency in righteous men, felt that the worst abominations were maturing, and with them the judgment, and by gradual approach stood finally (ver. 7 f.) in the crisis of the judgment, so he proceeds now in spirit through judgment and exile to salvation. His language turns in a constant alternation, swaying lyrically (cf. Ps. cxvi.), now toward himself, now toward the offended and forgiving God, now toward the enemy who is to be judged (cf. ver. 8).

Ver. 9. **The indignation of Jehovah will I bear,** with this humility (cf. vi. 8) and submission to the will of God, the germ of salvation is already given; when God's will is accepted as their will the sorrow ceases to be sorrow. **For I have sinned against him.** Humiliation under sorrow flows from the recognition of sin; the sorrow must be recognized as indignation, that is, as the manifestation of God's righteousness (Ps. li. 6). Such recognition moves his heart, which cannot fail to answer the call of his people; and this confidence gives Israel a joyful courage to endure **until he,** as he surely must, **shall maintain my cause.** Instead of standing my foe, as now, in the suit (vi. 1), He will make my cause against the heathen his own (Ps. xxxv. 1; xliii. 1), and secure for me my right (Ps. ix. 5). **To the light will he bring me forth,** out of the darkness of captivity (Ps. lxviii. 7) as once out of Egypt (Deut. viii. 14). **I shall see with pleasure** (בְּ) **his righteousness,** for even the deliverance of the sin-laden people is righteousness, because it is a fulfillment of the ancient promises (cf. on vi. 5).

Ver. 10. **And that shall my enemy see with** pain (cf. on ver. 8), **and shame shall cover her.** The verbs are not indicative, therefore not direct

1 [Cf. Gram. and Text. — Tr.]

announcement, but jussive: the prophecy of supplicating confidence. **Her who saith to me: Where is Jehovah thy God?** on whose help thou hast rested thy hope (cf. Ps. lxxix. 10; cxv. 2). This is the point of view from which Israel's cause becomes a controversy for God. **My eyes will look upon her with pleasure** — on the sharpened Nun, cf. Ewald, 198 a — **and she will be trodden down as mire in the streets.** The last Qamets in מרמס is shortened into Pattach, on account of the coming together of two tone syllables (cf. Is. x. 6). From the enemy the discourse turns off —

Ver. 11–13. While the representative element gives way more to the prophetic, and announces salvation to the holy community. **It is a day** (so De Dieu, Hitz., Casp.) **to build thy walls.** The anticipation of the exile goes forward, and from the certainty of the threatenings (iii. 12; iv. 10), the prophet expects (cf. ver. 7) the restoration of Jerusalem. To take this whole first member, not independently, but as a designation of time to the second ("on the day when thy walls shall be built, will," etc.) is forbidden by the ההוא in the second member; besides, that view would require the reading יום הבנות. At the bottom of the figure of wall-building lies the conception of the vineyard (Is. v.; xxvii. 2 ff.; Ps. lxxx.); גדר is the inclosing wall of a vineyard (the wall of a city is חומה). **In that day will the law be far removed.** The Rabbinic Exegesis, and with that those among recent Christian interpreters who are influenced more or less by the legal spirit of the Rabbins, have been obliged at this passage to have recourse to rationalistic evasions. According to the Targum and Hengstenberg, חק should mean the statutes imposed by the heathen oppressors; but this is not even remotely suggested by the connection, and the passage cited from Ps. xciv. 20 testifies rather for the opposite view. Caspari would have it mean that then the boundaries of the land of Israel shall lie in the far distance, be extended far beyond the original compass; but what should the walling around (ver. 11 a) mean if the border is abolished? That would be directly contrary to the figure. Keil: The limits between Israel and the nations, the law of Israel's exclusiveness shall be abolished. But why this limitation to one particular law? חק is the law in its widest and most general sense (Ps. xcix. 7; cxlviii. 6; Ex. xv. 25), and as it is unquestionably the doctrine of the New Testament, that in the time of the Gospel the fence of the law is broken down (Eph. ii. 14), so there is the less ground for denying to the prophet this meaning in our passage, because the whole context has left the historical ground far behind, rising to the ideal height of a spiritual contemplation, and because Jeremiah also, in a like connection in the famous passage (ch. iii. 16), prophesies a like triumph over the legal position (cf. Is. lxv. 1 f., and, in our prophet himself, ch. vi. 6 f.) We may designate our passage as exactly the text of Jeremiah's great prophecy (ch. xxxi. 31 ff.) concerning the new covenant. The parenthetical view therefore of the words ירחק חק ("in that day — far distant is the term — in that day," etc., De Wette, Ewald, Umbreit), is to be rejected.

Ver. 12. **In that day, unto thee,** the restored Zion, — the ו of the apodosis after the elliptical protasis to designate the time, as Ex. xvi. 6 f.; Ewald, 344 b, — **will one come from Assyria, and also the cities of Egypt** will come; not merely the scattered believers of Israel, who already (cf. ver. 11) will have founded the new structure, but also the heathen peoples will be added (Ps. lxxxvii.), and Assyria the scourge, first of all, but also the cities of Egypt, which here, as Is. xix. 6; xxxvii. 25, received the poetical name Mazor, instead of the usual Mizraim. She stands forth as the second world-power, on the other side of Israel from Assyria (cf. Zech. x. 11), and the cities are particularly regarded, as *præcipua membra* of the land of culture, even in Jehovah's Messianic prediction (Is. xix. 18). **Yea, from Egypt even unto the Euphrates, and even unto the sea from the sea,** from the Western, Mediterranean to the Eastern, Persian Sea (cf. Joel ii. 20), **and from the mountain to the mountain,** from Sinai in the south to Lebanon in the north, sc. will they come to thee. ים and ההר are local accusatives, and the induction of a great extent of country by the antithesis of the quarters of the compass is a common turn of discourse (cf. Am. viii. 12). The prophet's enumeration confines itself, as was natural, to what was suggested by history and geographical position, and indeed with a special horizon, having reference to Gen. xiii. 14 f.; but in the specification of the points of the compass lies potentially the universality of the plan of salvation (cf. iv. 1, 2). The same thought is expressed with greater clearness and smoothness by Isaiah (ch. xix. 23). But with cutting sharpness the prophet here also —

Ver. 13. For the last time connects with the promise the contrast of the judgment: **but the land** (we may understand, either with Caspari, from ver. 2, Canaan, which extends itself before those that flock unto it, or, with Keil, the whole earth, out of which those who seek deliverance crowd hither) **will lie waste on account of its inhabitants** (cf. vi. 11), **because of the fruit of their doings.** For just in Zion alone, the seat of God's congregation, will be deliverance (Ob. 17; Joel iii. 5), and this Zion is not the present, which itself is then destroyed (iii. 12, coll. iv. 1), but a spiritual, living Zion. So salvation and judgment lie side by side (Is. lxv. 24).

With that strikingly sudden turn, the occasion is given for *the last supplication* (vers. 14–17), which the prophet utters in the name of the congregation.

Ver. 14. **Feed thy people,** who after the terrors of the judgment need the shepherd's care, which also according to the promise (ver. 3) was to be given, **with thy staff,** the mark of the shepherd (cf. Zech. xi. 4 ff.); **the flock** (Ps. xcv. 7) **of thy possession** (Ps. xxviii. 9) **who dwell alone,** whom thou hast as it were separated from among the nations, and whose distinction it is from of old that they, separately from the nations, belong to thee alone (cf. Num. xxiii. 9; Ps. iv. 9, where לבדד belongs to the verb). שׁכני an old form instead of the stat. constr. (Ob. 3). "*Accusativus* habitantem *notat passionis non objectum sed effectum, ut acervos desolatos*" (Jer. xxxvii. 26). Ch. B. Michaelis. **In the forest in the midst of Carmel let them feed; in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.** The kingdom of Zion shall extend over the whole desolated land, as was denoted by the enumeration of the east and west, as Ps. lx. 9. That both regions named belong to the Ten Tribes may be accidental, but is better regarded as a commentary on ver. 13, in such sense

that, as the desolation of the Ten Tribes began sooner, so will it continue longer than that of Zion, that it lies waste while Zion has been built up. The phrase, "in the forest in the midst of Carmel," is not to be dragged back to the preceding, where it would be a useless, obscure, and halting addition, but to be connected with the second half of the verse, as the parallel passage (Jer. l. 19), which evidently rests on this, still more clearly shows. By "the days of old" are hardly meant the days of Uzziah, as Movers supposes, but those of David, as the normal period of the unity of the kingdom (cf. on ver. 2).

Ver. 15. As in that passage so here, the prophet's glance, while he quotes God's[1] answer, confirmatory of the prayer in ver. 14, goes still further back; **as in the days when thou, Israel, camest out of the land of Egypt** (Ps. cxiv.), **will I to them, thy people, show wonders of grace.** נִפְלָאוֹת are the special manifestations of God's mercy, often in opposition to the course of nature (Ex. iii. 20), which will be repeated in the age of salvation (the Messianic age) (ix. 5). As the supplicating people in ver. 14 spoke of itself in the third person, עַמְּךָ, so God in the first member here addresses it with *thou*, but in the second, speaks of it in the third person; "thou" is the present Israel, "he" is the Israel of the future.

Ver. 16. The old impression upon the heathen resulting from God's wonderful deeds in behalf of Israel (cf. Ex. xv. 14 f; [Josh. ii. 9 ff.]) is to be repeated. **The heathen will see it,** those, namely, who even then remain rebellious (cf. on ver. 14), **and be ashamed so that all their power vanishes** (Ezek. xxxii. 30). מִן ὥστε μὴ εἶναι, as Is. xxiii. 1, — **will lay their hand on their mouth;** extreme astonishment takes away the power of speech (Judg. xviii. 19; Is. lii. 15) — **their ears will be deaf** "before the thunder of Jehovah's mighty deeds (Job xxvi. 14)." Hitzig.

Ver. 17. The evil in them is overcome by the good, the serpent which reared itself against Jehovah is, like his type (Gen. iii.), by the eternal judgment, cast down to the ground; **dust shall they lick like the serpent** (Ps. lxxii. 9; Is. xlix. 23) **creeping on the earth** — properly: as those things which creep on the earth; כְּ *veritatis*, as Is. i. 7. **They shall tremble forth out of their hiding-places; to Jehovah our God** (cf. iv. 5) **shall they approach with terror** [*herbeizittern*] (Hos. xi. 10 f.), **and be in fear before thee** (Ps. xl. 4). With this the discourse passes over again to the congregation, and ends —

Vers. 18–20, *in a final lyric strophe* (as Ps. civ. 32 ff.; lxviii. 30 ff.; Rom. xi. 33 ff.). The wonderful deeds of God, exhibitions of power to the adversaries, which bring them to trembling submission, are for Israel deeds of mercy and truth, which open his mouth for an inspired cry, lay in his soul the spirit of free heart devotion (רוּחַ נְדִיבָה, Ps. li. 14), in the production of which all God's discipline, through law, deeds, and prophecy, culminates. **Who is a God like thee!** This also is borrowed from the triumphal ode of Miriam (Ex. xv. 11; cf. Ps. lxxxvi. 8). Whether there is any play here on the name Micah, must be left undecided. **Forgiving iniquity and graciously passing over all transgression for the remnant of his people** (cf. on ii. 11). Back of this and what follows lies the description of the compassion of God in Ex. xxxiv. 6 f.; in the word עֹבֵר perhaps an allusion to the great act of mercy (Ex. xii. 12, 13). **He does not hold his anger forever, for he has his pleasure in mercy** (Ps. ciii. 9).

Ver. 19. **He will again have compassion on us** (on the constr. vid. Gesen. § 142, 3 b), **will tread down our iniquities,** which rise up against us as enemies, and overpower us (Ps. lxv. 4). **Yea, he will cast into the depth of the sea all their sins,** the prophet adds in confirmation, here also regarding the sins as foes, and intentionally alluding to Ex. xv. 10.

Ver. 20. **Thou wilt show truth to Jacob,** wilt maintain for the descendants what thou hast promised them in their progenitor, **mercy to Abraham,** who lives on in his posterity, and waits for the promise (John viii. 56), and was not vainly called a father of a multitude. Thou wilt show to them the truth and grace **which thou hast sworn to our fathers from the days of antiquity.** The unity of the plan of salvation for Israel from beginning to end (for the mercy and truth of God are the scarlet threads which run through it), is the thought with which the prophet, placing himself at the culminating point of revelation, concludes. This perspective has been expanded only from the point of view of the New Testament (Matt. xxv. 34).

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

God has entered into a covenant relation with Israel, dating (vii. 21) from the days of the patriarchs. Hence, while His judgments roar against the heathen, unproclaimed and without pity, to Israel He first demonstrates his guilt, and that by setting before Himself and the people alike the eternal principles which He has given in His revelation by word and deed, and in the face of these proves to Israel that He has kept His truth, but that Israel has broken the covenant and become guilty. This conviction He secures before the punishment, that the latter may not prove an annihilation, but be made fruitful of improvement. For such fruit results from the punishment, provided the latter turns the sinner in upon himself, and when it is borne with the consciousness that it is just. Only on this condition, finally, is forgiveness possible; yea (while it appears that the sin is too great to be possibly expiated by punishment), necessary according to the grace of God. To this end serves the controversy at law.

This begins with a reference to those original works of redemption by which God founded the congregation, and with marvelous exhibitions of favor called them to be his people. Thereby Israel from the beginning entered into an obligation to be specially consecrated to Him: I am the Lord thy God. This obligation was represented in an outward system of duties. The ceremonial cultus, however, is only a passing pedagogic stage. It cannot be regarded as the independent principle and soul of the relation, because it offers to God

1 This form of dialogue between God and the people is very common in the hymnistic style of the prophets; more particularly at the conclusion where the prophetic ecstasy has reached its climax. Hosea xiv., *e.g.*, cannot be understood at all without bearing in mind that we have a dialogue before us. This is the עֲנוֹת, the solemn responsive song (Ex. xv. 21) at the time of the salvation, as Hosea (ii. 18 [16]) foretells.

nothing which does not already belong to Him, and in consistency it would lead to ungodly murder. It must look beyond itself, and can furnish no couch of rest for the congregation. The regulative and substantial principle in the law is, rather, the moral kernel, the righteousness of the heart.

And according to this principle must Israel be judged and condemned; for, when God's truth, appearing in judgment, looks around for wisdom (Prov. i. 7) it perceives in every house the folly (Ps. xiv. 1) of sinners, who would fain enjoy God's blessing without purity of life. Therefore the greed and slavery of the sinner must become his punishment; to eat and not be satisfied, to labor and not enjoy the fruits, the miserable lot of involuntary servitude, is their normal end. Wherever like sins exist there is like punishment; no right of legitimacy can secure the kingdom of Judah against the fate of Samaria, if the ways here are the same as there.

Sent forth by God and his Spirit (Is. xlviii. 16), the true Israel wanders through the ages, and struggles for embodiment. But the longer the time the less does present reality correspond to the character which he is obliged to demand of his members. According to this they should be a living possession, prophets and priests to God (Ex. xix. 5, 6). Nay, he appears to himself now as a vineyard, a fruit garden which has been gleaned; of those who are now called Israelites he can scarcely recognize one as a member of his body. Not a blooming orchard is this people, not belted together by the bands of divine peace into one well-pleasing whole, but involved in the bonds of iniquity, which bind the chiefs of the people (John vii. 48) together; so closely involved that in the day of judgment they cannot release themselves. The connection is external; inwardly, not the national bond merely, but all, even the most intimate relations of the family are utterly fretted away, and that will show itself in the worst outbreaks of alienation and discord.

But yet the true Israel knows that his time will come. Although he, with all his promises, is bound to the substratum of this neglected nationality, he knows still that when it has to be given up (v. 2) to punishment, he with it will be given up only to redemption. In the darkness of their abandonment to the world, Jehovah is his light.

Hence comes that right disposition to endure, which the litigation was intended to produce: the endurance of the anger as a cross which we take upon ourselves without reluctance: *I will bear;* and the confident waiting for deliverance. He submits to be given up to the hands of the world-power, but nevertheless knows that in that day when God shall perform his promises, out of these heathen also all that are called shall enter into the new Jerusalem, which will be divested of all enclosure and narrowness; that if all lie in ruins the eternal kingdom of God will arise upon the ruins. Then will the Lord be the shepherd of the true Israel, now become actual and visible. He will march with might at the head of his own people. The adversaries, scattered and cast to the ground, come trembling unto Jehovah whom they had despised.

That will be the great day of the forgiveness of sins, and of the infliction of punishment, which only the God of the true Israel can ensure, for he takes pleasure in compassion. And it must come because the compassionate God is a true and faithful God, and the Covenant made with the fathers can be broken by nothing which may come between.

Schmieder (vi. 4): Miriam, sister of Moses and Aaron, was a prophetess (Ex. xv. 20). Just as the deliverance out of Egypt, as beginning of the creation of the people of God, includes within it all the subsequent works of protection and redemption, so the three personages, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, are the types of the whole legislation of the entire priesthood and prophecy, therefore all God's saving institutions for Israel (vii. 11 ff.). The day of vengeance upon evil is the dawn of the day of redemption and restoration for the congregation of the saints. This is the pervading doctrine of the whole Bible; with the flood comes the rain-bow to Noah, with the destruction of Pharaoh the deliverance from Egypt, with Saul's death David's glory, with the destruction of Jerusalem the new hope of Zion, with the fall of Babylon, the return of the Jews, with the judgment upon the heathen the return of the Jews.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Mirror of Evangelical Repentance.

1. Everything is open and manifest before God; the dumb earth is his witness. Hide not thyself (vi. 1, 2).
2. How much has He done for thee? Hast thou ever considered it? (vers. 3–5).
3. Thou hast outwardly taken part in his worship, mayest even have gone further in it than was necessary. But how is it with thee inwardly? (vers. 6, 7.)
4. Thou knowest his law, but thy life accuses thee (vers. 8, 9–12).
5. Thou knowest that He is judge, and art acquainted with his judgments. But thy ways show that thou regardest them not (vers. 13–16).
6. Yea. Lord, I confess (vii. 1–6).
7. But I believe also; therefore will I fain bear thy judgments (vers. 7–9).
8. For I know thy promises (vers. 10–17).
9. And will celebrate thy great compassion (vers. 18–21).

Or: *The History of the congregation in God's light* (Is. ii. 15). Exordium: The light of God a light of judgment (vi. 1, 2).

1. The selection and establishment of the congregation (vers. 3–5).
2. The legislation (vers. 6–8).
3. Sin (vers. 9–16).
4. The acknowledgment of sin (vii. 1–6). Transitus: The light of God a light of grace (vers. 7, 8).
5. The return (ver. 9).
6. The experience of grace (vers. 10–20).

Ver. 1. The heart of man is harder than a stone. The rocks could not but be moved by the gratuitous beneficence of God, and his complaint. Men remain unaffected, "If these should keep silence the stones would cry out." — Ver. 2. Is there greater condescension than this, that the Lord of heaven and earth, before whom none living is just, and who sees through and through everything, will not judge Israel, unless He have seen his sins and consented to it. How soon, O Christian, art thou ready with thy judgments! and allowest thy brother no time for reply, and hast no ear for him! — Ver. 3. What God has done for us from our youth up is nothing but benefits. Therefore we should, even in painful experiences, know that the hour cometh, when we shall recog-

nize them as mercies from God. What the deliverance from Egypt was for Israel, that is for us the redemption from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. Thus have we become his holy people and possession. — Ver. 4. A great benefit is it when God at the right time puts the right people at the head of the congregation. To such right people it pertains also that they should meet opposition. — Ver. 5. Balaam came to curse, but when he sought God (Num. xxiii. 3), his curse was turned into a blessing. Whatever thou wouldst do, forget not to seek God, that thou mayest do all as his instrument. To the upright He gives success. The end of all earnest meditation on the ways of God is that one perceives them to be righteousness. — Vers. 6-8. *A sermon in time of war.* The people seek their God and thereby become conscious of their guilt. Then seeking is equivalent to atonement. Wherewith? (1.) Not with outward behavior. Fast-days help not, and the first-born who lie dead on battle-fields, atone not for the sins of the people. Rather (2) with the heart. Holy wars like those of David are scarcely waged any more, but it ought to be the case that wars should be waged holily. Those who are at home, however, should show mildness and modesty. — Ver. 6. That is the way of sinful man, to excuse himself as if he knew not God's word. Then we speak as if we knew not what He really demands (Luke x. 29 ff.). Or we capriciously form notions of God as if He demanded things which no man can perform. No heart is so lazy that it would not find out how to reach what is good (Prov. xxii. 13). — Ver. 8. If thou seekest God, ask thyself above all, What does God seek in me? *To do right, κατεργάζεσθαι δικαιοσύνην* (Acts x. 39), is a hard piece of work, and whoever reflects upon it deeply perceives that no man alive is just before God. The power for that, however, comes from the *loving mercy.* Clemency towards our neighbor is doubtless intended (Hos. vi. 6), but the expression is designedly so put that we are obliged to think of the undeserved mercy of Him who first loved us. He who imagines that he loved first has not attained to the third thing, *walking humbly.* However much he may outwardly show humility, it is only a wretched gloss upon a puffed up and proud heart. And pride in the house of God is a miserable thing. — Ver. 9. The voice of the Lord calls ever, but not ever in the same way; sometimes for invitation, again to judgment. He who hears not the former at the time must hear the other after the time. O that men would not always regard merely the rod of correction, but ever also Him who hath appointed it! They would then complain of nothing but their own sin. — Ver. 10. It is a helpful means to repentance, to inquire carefully in regard to each of our physical and intellectual possessions, how we came by them. Trade is a dangerous art; but God condemns not the art, only the fraud which is practiced with it. The grain speculators, even in Micah's time, received the first curse. — Ver. 11. He also has false weight who judges not his neighbor with the same measure as himself. — Ver. 12. It soon comes to pass with a man that he believes his own lies, in fact no longer knows what lies he tells, so that his tongue is a demon to itself, deceit is in his mouth. When it has reached that point it is no wonder that God (ver. 13) carries away him who is himself sin with his sin. — Ver. 14. The covetous pines after what he desires even in enjoying it. The feeling of perpetual emptiness is no longer a sign of sin merely, but already of the judgment of God. Save what thou canst, thou canst save nothing from God. — Ver. 15. The curse that man should in the sweat of his face eat bread may still be aggravated. God's eye looks about indeed for wisdom (ver. 9), but what He sees is men who with eyes open run into destruction as if they would do it by force. Generation after generation heaps up the curse; woe to the generation on whom it breaks! Then the sins of fathers and children lie on one head. How canst thou excuse thy faults by maintaining that thou hast been a tender father or mother toward thine own, when they yet are to bear the punishment of thy faults? Take care that thou heap up the reward for the good works which thou hast done; that is the best inheritance.

Chap. viii. As the true Israel to the people of Israel, so Christ stands to his congregation. There an invisible head with many visible members, who can however be such only in name, as being called Israelites; here likewise with Christians.

What Christ's congregation should say in an evil time.

1. *Her complaint,* vers. 1-4 a. That the saints have grown few and iniquity abundant. The complaint bears most hard upon the princes according to their various responsibility.

2. *Their fear,* ver. 4 b-6. The day of God must certainly come, and that with fearful signs.

3. *Their comfort.*

(a.) They know on whom they trust, know his name, and his readiness to hear, his wounding and healing, and his nature, that he is light (vers. 7, 8). Therefore they wait patiently in the darkness.

(b.) They know that right must remain right (ver. 9). Therefore they patiently endure wrong.

(c.) They know that to their adversaries an evil lot is appointed (ver. 10). Therefore they weary not.

(d.) They know what is before them, namely, that the evil and narrow is to be torn down, in order to build again well and wide (vers. 11-13). Therefore they complain not that it is torn down.

(e.) They know their shepherd's voice and works from of old (vers. 15-18). Therefore they meditate on the days of old (Ps. lxxvii. 6), and hold before him his Word.

(f.) They have a complete revelation of God's nature, that He is the only, and a sin-forgiving, God, gracious and powerful over sin and faithful (vers. 18-20). Therefore, they celebrate and praise Him even in the most wretched time.

A pious soul is for the Lord a refreshment. That is not said, however, to puff up, but for the encouragement of those who love God. Who would not willingly prepare a delight for Him! — Ver. 2. When once the saints die out of a land, there is soon manifested a whole abyss of abominable things, which they alone, through their life and prayers, have kept down. The prayers of the pious restrain the judgment. — Ver. 3. How would God's kingdom be promoted, if only the same activity, invention, and perseverance were applied to its objects, which are spent in works of wickedness. — Every judge ought to think that he has an office from God, and that God's cause should be cheap to no one. — It is also a bad sign when in a land unbridled words prevail. Sins of the tongue increase also the burden. The further a man's voice is heard, the more honestly should he guard his mouth. — Ver. 4. It is a bad thing to draw others into one's own matters and interests. Many a one has thought he did God service while he was making a party for the accomplish-

ment of his own plans, and was only a snare for the day of judgment. God alone makes his parties for Himself; his programme is not theses, but the Holy Scriptures; his leader is the Holy Spirit. When He works not (and He works in truthfulness and peace, without any human addition, as a spirit of willingness, without any harm or calumny toward others), then all work is vain. All partisanship leads to the state of things described in ver. 5. How can the kingdom of God be built up, when its original foundation tears itself in pieces. It is written that Abraham went out from his kindred, but not that he stood up against them and mocked them. — Ver. 7. Martha is careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful. To wait is the strongest power, to pray is the strongest weapon; for they both have God for an ally; and when He hears it is also effectually heard. — Ver. 8. He who falls without God never rises again. What a fearful darkness is that in which they must sit who have no God! And what is all darkness for us if we have God? The name of God is a light shining in the depth of the heart, and therefore cannot be extinguished from without. — Ver. 9. The evangelical call to repentance results in the conversion of the will with hearty sorrow. Evangelical repentance is not *doing* but *suffering*. Works of repentance (*satisfactio operis*) are not pain but pleasure, therefore self deception, or, if they were not a pleasure, but were imposed by authority, against one's will, they would be wholly useless, since then not the will of him who renders them performs them, but properly the will of Him by whom they are imposed. But the pain resulting from a clear discernment of the misery of sitting deservedly far from God in our misery, is an unspeakable grief; and he who has not felt it knows not yet what repentance is. It is so profound that if faith were not present (9 b), it must inevitably become despair. — Ver. 11. Where life in the kingdom of God must first be propped up by statutes, there is no life begun, but whitewashed death. The kingdom of God begins in a man with the law of liberty. The embracing wall which God draws around the new Jerusalem is He himself (Zech. ii. 8). That is a very wide room. There all the peoples of the earth have a place. — Ver. 13. But this birth also takes place amid pains. — Ver. 14. The shepherd of the new congregation is the Messiah (v. 3). Therefore is her room also (against ver. 11) a very narrow, separate room; there, namely, where good pasture is for his sheep (Ps. xxiii. 2); the wilderness remains for the morally wild. — Ver. 15. In the history of the kingdom of God there is a constant similarity in the main lines. Naturally, for God is unchanging, and his doings always divine, wonderful. — Ver. 16. When He once begins to work there is also an end of human power. Desire not to bring on yourselves the wonder! — Ver. 17. How has the serpent revived in so many persons! The seed of the woman, Abraham's seed, has become as the sand of the sea, but the other not less. The final biting of the heel and the final crushing of the head are not yet come. — Ver. 18. In all the world for Him whose look sees highest over the world and into eternity, there is nothing so commendable as the forgiveness of sins. He who said: Thy sins are forgiven thee, could be no other than God, unless he were more criminal than Adam; for he exercised the highest prerogative of God. — Ver. 19. The last short sting of repentance: Belongest thou also to the "remnant?" The "remnant" is lame and crippled (iv. 7); it needs the physician. God takes pleasure in mercy; what a look does that give us into the deepest heart of God! There no man sees a bottom, but as deeply as he can see, nothing but delight. — Ver. 20. God has a long memory; and his blessing extends to the thousandth generation.

On vi. 1. Luther: People are wont, especially if they hear of the anger of God, to believe that it will not go so fearfully with them. Hence they allow themselves to suppose that in the midst of sin they may hope to find forgiveness and pardon, and may either laugh at the prophet's threatening or despise it as human fiction. Such mistake would the prophet guard against when he says, not that men should hear him, but the Lord; the Lord speaks, and not he.

Tarnov: From men who would not hear, the discourse turns to the hills and mountains, that it may be heard.

Ver. 3. Chrysostom: He calls those his people who would not call Him God; those who strive to take from Him the kingdom He treats not as haughty rebels, but invites them to Him mildly, and says: My people, what have I done to thee? Have I been burdensome to thee? Thou canst say nothing of that kind. But even if thou couldst thou shouldst not have fallen away from Him. For who is the son whom his father chastiseth not? But not once hast thou occasion to speak of that. Cf. Jer. ii. 5.

Ver. 4. Michaelis: It is an ungodly thing to injure him from whom thou hast received no evil, much more ungodly still to injure the most bountiful benefactor.

Ver. 5. Hengstenberg: That also is regarded as a part of Balaam's answer which served as its practical guaranty.

Ver. 6. Luther: God had commanded sacrifices. But He would receive them as certain testimony of obedience toward Him if they were not disobedient in much greater and more important things. But since they neglect the greater acts of worship, and perform the lesser and more irrational acts with so ungodly a purpose, namely, that the sacrifices should be a payment for their sins, God regards their offerings as an abomination, and mocks them.

Michaelis: They are not able to deny their sins, but practice hypocrisy when they offer sacrifices and outward things, but are unconcerned about repentance.

Ver. 8. Luther: That is also a service which all men in every position can render.

Michaelis: It is the most excellent things in the law which Christ, in opposition to the purely pedagogic Old Testament portions of the law, calls τὰ βαρύτερα τοῦ νόμου. There is nothing more humble or more humbling than faith.

Vers. 13. Luther: We Germans have experienced such things through war.

Ch. vii. 1. Burck: This is a complaint. To the pious teacher, namely, it is sad, that the perverseness of human nature is so great, that not only are the ungodly not improved, but in some sort actually with design and exertion become daily worse. On this account, however, we ought not to let the calling sleep nor be neglected. For on the teachers lie two things, says Luther: first, that they save their soul, as Ezekiel speaks, secondly, that the evil world should have a testimony against it. "Had I not come and spoken," said Jesus, "they had not had sin." To this may be added the third most important cause, that when

all others blaspheme, God's name may be hallowed.

SCHLIER: The prophet proclaims to his people the painful confession of sin, that they may learn by that what is necessary. The confession of sin is followed by the confession of faith.

Ver. 2. LUTHER: There is none that walketh rightly. Because, namely, he sees that all men, when it goes well and prosperously, live without fear of God, and in the highest wantonness. Again when misfortune comes, they either faint or betake themselves to carnal helps and means. — Ver. 3. Therefore should rulers let sins in them be freely punished (for it is God's command), but they should stand clear of sins.

Ver. 7. CALWER BIBLE: Thus speaks the prophet, in the name of the little flock, to the ungodly opposers.

MICHAELIS: *But I:* that is an antithesis to the foregoing, and means: It is even so; all is getting bad; the righteous and fearful judgments of God hang over men's heads; but what shall I do in such a state of things? — despair, or murmur, or speak impatiently? Rather, etc. He does not allow himself to be led away by the wickedness of the great mass, and what is more, he does not throw away hope; although the deluge must come, know that God can save even in the deluge. The ground of his hope lies in God: the God of my salvation. He will certainly save me, who has from ancient times been my salvation, and who is called God of salvation. Is. xviii. 10; Hab. iii. 18.

Ver. 8. CALVIN: The feeling of divine grace in adversity is quite peculiarly comparable to the light, as when one who has fallen into a deep pit yet perceives a distant gleam of the sun when he raises his eyes. So should we also not be confounded, however dense and gloomy the darkness may be in our trials, but ever keep the spark of light glowing for us, that is, faith should ever raise our eyes upward that we may have a feeling of the divine goodness.

Ver. 9. LUTHER: It may seem an amusing thing, that Basilius, in a letter in which he laments his mother's death, says that this has happened because of her sin. But, truly, whoever thinks that even the most trifling misfortune has its source in this fountain, mistakes not, but lives nobly in the fear of God.

CALWER BIBLE: Even the pious can never except themselves from the general guilt, and must therefore also take their part of the general punishment, although they may live innocently from the world and before the world. Cf. 1 Pet. iv. 12–19.

MICHAELIS: *Until;* that is twofold, first, the immovable patience of the congregation, secondly, the end of the appointed suffering.

Ver. 10. MICHAELIS: They rejoice not so much over the destruction of enemies as over the assurance of the favor of God, whose name hitherto has been so much profaned by them.

Ver. 12. HENGSTENBERG: It is not enough that the people of God be free from the slavery of the world; they become also the object of the longing of the nations, even the strongest and most hostile; the magnet which attracts them.

Ver. 13. LUTHER: In these words we should notice the special diligence of the Holy Spirit, which sees clearly what sort of thoughts the wicked synagogue will have, that they will hope for a carnal kingdom, and despise the preaching of the Gospel on that account. Such an error, which not only obscures the Kingdom of Heaven but utterly takes it away, the Holy Spirit would here anticipate and forestall.

Ver. 14. TARNOV: With *thy* staff; not with the iron rod of Moses, but with thine, the leading of the Holy Spirit, with thy Word and Spirit; for these are the instruments of the kingdom of God.

COCCEIUS: With the staff the shepherd numbers his sheep, smites, leads them, points out whither they should go, from what they should turn aside, where they should find pasture.

Ver. 18. MICHAELIS: The congregation which here speaks through the prophet, is sunk in an abyss, while it contemplates the riches of the divine grace and mercy, which in the last times is to come upon it.

Vers. 18 ff. BURCK: The Holy Scriptures reveal a new, rich depth of the divine fullness, and a truly inexhaustible treasure of "indulgence." There are no *casus reservati.*

STARKE: Ch. vi. 1. Teachers and preachers in their teaching should not make a show of strange languages, or clothe themselves in the writings of Church fathers, or even in unprofitable fables, but should abide by God's Word alone, and speak that. On the mountains and hills in particular was idolatry practiced, so that they had evidence of men's ungodliness. — Ver. 3. God earnestly desires the salvation of all. — Ver. 4. We should remember not only the benefits which God has shown to us, but particularly those also which our forefathers have experienced. — The teaching and the governing office should be in accord with each other. — Ver. 5. The wish of the enemies of the Church, to destroy it, has never succeeded. — Vers. 6, 7. Most powerfully does our own conscience bear witness to the necessity of a vicarious atonement, in that it cannot otherwise be pacified. It makes a great difference whether pious or ungodly people ask: How shall we appease God? Even with such works as God has commanded can He not be served, if they are performed by an impenitent man. By self-appointed acts of worship He is only angered the more. — Ver. 8. Believe, love, and endure. As it is a great sorrow when men whom God has created and Christ redeemed, know neither God nor Christ, so, on the contrary, it is a great blessing, when we know from God's Word, and perceive what is good, and what God demands of us. On the ground of ignorance, since we can know but will not, we cannot excuse ourselves. — Ver. 9. A man sees only what is before his eyes, but God sees the heart. Those who will not give ear to God's paternal admonitions must taste his sharp rod. — Ver. 10. There are ungodly men who knowingly have in their house goods gained by unrighteousness. Such goods are not treasures, but a coal, by which the rest also that has been honestly gained shall be consumed. — Ver. 11. A Christian householder should endure no false balance or false weight in his house. — Ver. 12. Rich people who love unrighteousness, meet unrighteousness also as a reward. Covetous people are generally lying people also. Those who possess goods wickedly acquired commonly oppress the poor also with great violence and pride; covetousness is insatiable. — Ver. 13. Here He begins to display the rod which He had commanded in ver. 9 to hear. God begins with lighter punishments, but when these do not secure improvement, He makes them heavier in proportion as they are more prolonged. — Ver. 14. Famine is one of God's greatest plagues. As the pious, in all their conduct, have God about, with, and for them, so

the wicked, on the other hand, have Him against them. — Ver. 15. If we would enjoy our labor, we must fear God and pursue piety, fairness, and justice. — Ver. 16. Subjects are often much more submissive to their rulers in their wicked requirements than in just and commendable regulations. — Ch. vii. 1. When teachers see no fruit of their labors, they should not straightway lay them down, but faithfully do their own part and commend it to God's blessing. — Ver. 2. Religion should not be judged by the lives of men. Cain has in all times his brother. Before God sends the general calamities on a land, He is wont to remove the pious people by death, that they may not see the evil. Those also who go about with secret plots and wicked practices are murderers before God, for He seeth the heart. — Ver. 4. The ungodly believe not what is threatened them until they have it in hand; then they are utterly cast down and disheartened, so that they can counsel neither themselves nor others. — Ver. 5. Christians ought to be prudent. — Ver. 6. When men first give themselves up to carnal lusts, and lose sight of all shame and respect for God, then natural affection also commonly dies out. —Ver. 7. See how strenuously he insists that he has a God, much as if the other crowd had no God. The wicked have a God, doubtless, but an angry God, a God of vengeance and not of salvation. He that would be secure against evil example must look to the Lord in obedience and patience. — Ver. 8. God sometimes leaves believers also to stumble and fall, that they may be humbled, but He helps them up again. — Ver. 9. The righteous complains first of himself. — Ver. 10. God punishes not only the blasphemies which are cast upon Him, but the calumnies against his children also. — Ver. 11. The preaching of the Gospel is the means by which God maintains and enlarges his Church. — Ver. 13. The earth is the Lord's, the men, however, are its guests and inhabitants. — Ver. 14. God would have us pray to Him for the good things which He promises us. Believers have in Christ no want, but full enjoyment. — Ver. 16. It annoys the wicked greatly, when they see that the Gospel is spread abroad in spite of them. — Ver. 17. It is among the items of the great mystery, that the unbelieving world has believed the Gospel. — Ver. 18. Not only is there no other God, but also there is in heaven and on earth no such loving-kindness to be found as with God, who forgiveth sins. God is not so compassionate as to have no anger, but only so that He holds it not forever. Sin is Satan's work, forgiveness God's. — Ver. 19. The sea is the blood of Jesus Christ. God not only forgives sins, but gives us the power also to subdue sin. — Ver. 20. As God Himself is truth, so also is his Word truth, on which we may confidently rest.

Pfaff: Ch. vi. 6–8. Ye cannot excuse yourselves, ungodly men, as not having known the will of God. As clearly and richly as this has been made known to you, as many corrections, from the Good Spirit as ye have received in your souls, so often has conscience in you been awakened. But ye hold the truth in unrighteousness. — Ver. 13. Public iniquity and deceit are certainly followed by heavy judgments; for the property gathered by them must become a disgrace (vii. 8). In the darkness of the greatest affliction, the pious still see the light, and find their pleasure in the Lord's mercy, which is hidden in the cross.

Rieger: Ch. vi. (1) The forcible beginning, for the awakening of hearts, vers. 1, 2. (2) The friendly direction, for the winning of hearts, vers. 3–8. (3) The sharp threatening against the sealed hearts, vers. 9–16. On vers. 6, 7. As men now-a-days express their unreasonableness towards the service of God in spirit and in truth, when they say, One scarcely ever knows what one ought to do; they will be contented with nothing any more. — Ver. 8. To conduct one's self in all things earnestly, according to the divine and not the human standard, and in this to give to the Word of God its judicial power; to practice kindness with delight, and to walk in humble faith before and with God: in that light let each one consider his own heart and conscience. — Ver. 9 ff. God has never accumulated presages of future events for the gratification of curious inquisitiveness, but to promote improvement at the present, thereby to render aid against unrighteousness. — Ch. vii. 1 ff. One must never rest satisfied with discourses and representations to men, but must support the public address by many words before and with the Father in secret; and if one will cover the unfruitfulness of the public labor with fatigue, one must refresh himself again by this intercourse with God. — Ver. 2. For the righteous who doubtless yet remained it was a salutary prompting that they should not so conceal themselves (Prov. xxviii. 28), but be active also in the better spirit. — Ver. 8 ff. There are always people who are glad to see it when the truth is so humbled, and her confessors brought into such straits, that it seems to be all over with religion, order, and discipline. They together make up the enemy that is hostile to Zion. — Ver. 9. This makes one submissive under all the reproach upon the Church and her service, to observe that there is indignation at the bottom of it, that God thus withdraws Himself, and we no more attain to the blessing of former witnesses. But hope refreshes the heart.

Schmieder: Ch. vi. 3. This question of the conscience, cutting deep into the sinful heart, addresses itself still, and in a still more humiliating way, to the people whom the Lord has purchased with his blood. The liturgy of the Romish Church, on Good Friday, during the adoration of the cross (the so-called lamentations), has appropriated this complaint of the Lord to the holy people: "I led you forty years long through the wilderness, fed thee with manna, and brought thee into a good land, and thou hast therefor crucified thy Saviour. I planted thee as my beautiful vineyard, and thou hast become bitter for me, hast given me vinegar to drink in my thirst, with a spear hast pierced my side. For thy sake I scourged Egypt and her first-born, and thou hast caused me to be scourged," etc. — Ver. 7. Not indeed, unless it is a sign of a heart offering itself to God. — Ver. 8. Doing rightly is an exhibition of faith, complete devotion to God is the real spiritual burnt-offering. To love mercy toward others is the true daily meat-offering. To walk humbly, to be mindful that God is the Holy One, thou a poor sinner, that is the true spiritual sin-offering. — Ver. 14. That is the curse of the covetous, that he is never satisfied; the blessing of God and contentment are wanting. — Ch. vii. 3. Thus ever the history of Naboth's vineyard repeats itself. The prince demands it; since Naboth will not consent, judges are bribed, and the queen says what she lusts after; Naboth, though innocent, must die as a blasphemer; thus they weave the net. — Ver. 4. The thorn, the hedge, is in the vegetable kingdom the type of what is evil, because it injures (2 Kings xiv.; Judg. ix.); as the vine, the olive, the fig tree are the

type of the good, because they give fruit and shadow. — Ver. 5 ff. Compare Matt. x. 35 f., where by the use which our Lord makes of this prophetic office it is clear that the times of such domestic discord and insecurity, come then especially when, after the undisturbed dominion of evil, the Spirit of God arouses and enlivens the remnant of the pious, so that they with word and deed bear witness against wickedness, and contend with Satan. Then must the pious man contend and suffer for the Lord's sake, but also watch lest he commit sin, and thus be rightfully chastised for his sin's sake. — Ver. 14. Since on Carmel, in Bashan and Gilead, was the best pasture, and since Israel is here compared to a flock, these good pasture grounds are here typically assigned to the people, while yet only the fruitful abodes in the land of Canaan are really meant. — Ver. 18. That is the so-called angry God of the Old Testament. — Ver. 19. Our misdeeds are our most dangerous enemy and accuser; but even this Satan will the God of peace subdue to Himself and us, and has already done it, if we trust wholly to Him who treads the serpent under foot. Happy he whose sin is buried (Rom. vi. 4).

QUANDT: Ch. vi. *Of Israel's gratitude.* (1) Israel's unthankfulness for God's previous mercy, vers. 1, 5. (2) ver. 6–8. How Israel should thank God. (3) ver. 9–16. How God will punish thankless Israel. — Ver. 1. The mountains and hills signify the prominent leaders of the people. — Ver. 10. Cf. Am. viii. 5, 6. – Ver. 11. Inquiry of the conscience terrified by the searching of the Lord. Not as if the grain-speculators actually inquired thus. But Micah wishes that they would so inquire, that they might come to themselves and repent. — Ver. 12. The punishment of men on earth is never the ultimate end, but ever the means to the end of their conversion. — Ch. vii. *Mercy glories over judgment.* — Ver. 2. The seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal were not wanting in Micah's time either. But if one would picture the impression made by a barren landscape, he does not stop on the description of a flower or two which may bloom somewhere in concealment. The Redeemer also said universally: Ye would not, and leaves Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea out of the account. — Ver. 20. God's oath, on which Micah here at the end leans as on a rock, is that of Gen. xiii. 16 ff. How God kept it, see in Luke i. 72–75.

[MATTHEW HENRY: on ch. vi. 4. When we are calling to mind God's *former* mercies to us, we must not forget the mercy of good teachers and governors when we were young. Let those be made mention of, to the glory of God, who went before us, saying, *This is the way, walk in it;* it was God that *sent them before us*, to prepare the way of the Lord, and to prepare a people for Him. — Ver. 6–8. Deep convictions of guilt and wrath will put men upon inquiries after peace and pardon, and then, and not till then, there begins to be some hope of them. Those that are thoroughly convinced of sin, of the malignity of it, and of their misery and danger by reason of it, would give all the world, if they had it, for peace and pardon. Men will part with anything rather than their sins, but they part with nothing, to God's acceptance, unless they part with them. — Ver. 9. It is a point of true wisdom to discover *the name of God* in the *voice of God*, and to learn what He is from what He says. Every rod has a voice, and it is the voice of God that is to be heard in the rod of God; and it is well for those that understand the language of it; which if we would do, we must have an eye to *Him that appointed it.* Every rod is appointed, of what kind it shall be, where it shall light, and how long it shall lie. The work of ministers is to explain the providences of God, and to quicken and direct men to the lessons that are taught by them. — Ver. 16. If professors of religion ruin themselves, their ruin will be the most reproachful of any other; and they in a special manner will rise at the last day to everlasting shame and contempt. — Ch. vi. 1. Some think that this intimates not only that good people were few, but that those few who remained, who went for good people, were good for little; like the small withered grapes, the *refuse* that were *left behind*, not only by the gatherer, but by the gleaner. When the prophet observed this universal degeneracy, it made him *desire the first-ripe fruit;* he wished to see such worthy, good men as were in the former ages, were the ornaments of the primitive times, and as far exceeded the best of all the present age as the first and full-ripe fruits do those of the latter growth, that never come to maturity. When we read and hear of the wisdom and zeal, the strictness and conscientiousness, the devotion and charity, of the professors of religion in former ages, and see the reverse of this in those of the present age, we cannot but sit down and wish with a sigh, *O, for primitive Christianity again!* Where are the plainness and integrity of those that went before us? Where are the Israelites indeed, without guile? Our *souls desire* them, but in vain. The golden age is gone and past recall; we must make the best of what is, for we are not likely to see such times as have been.[1] — Ver. 9. Those that are truly penitent for sin will see a great deal of reason to be patient under affliction. — Ver. 15. God's *former* favors to his Church are patterns of *future* favors, and shall again be copied out as there is occasion. — TR.]

[1 So good people have been wont to complain, in Church and State, since the Homeric heroes, at least, of the degeneracy of each generation, as compared with the preceding one. If such wailings were reasonable, what angelic piety and social virtue must have flourished three thousand years ago, and how dreadful to think of our posterity, three thousand years hence, looking back, over countless steps of deterioration, to us as paragons of lost perfection! This view of things is, rather, a lazy or helpless recognition of the remaining evil which it behooves each age to put away or diminish. As Henry himself says on ver. 9, "When we complain to God of the badness of the times, we ought to complain against ourselves for the badness of our own hearts." — TR.]

THE

BOOK OF NAHUM.

EXPOUNDED

BY

PAUL KLEINERT,

PASTOR AT ST. GERTRAUD, AND PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN.

TRANSLATED AND ENLARGED

BY

CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D.,

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE IN THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT CHICAGO, ILL.

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HABAKKUK.

INTRODUCTION.

I. *Contents and Form.*

The first part of this book, chaps. i. and ii., contains a dialogue between God and the prophet, which, not only by its form, but also by the pure elevation of its style, is closely connected with Micah vi. and vii. It takes from the empirical present only its starting-point, in order to exhibit immediately the great course of coming events, according to its nature, as an embodiment of the fundamental ideas of the kingdom of God. The dialogue treats, in two gradations, of God's plan with Israel and with the heathen secular power, which is here pointed out with clear precision as the Chaldæan, i. 6. Israel's sin must be punished by a severe and powerful judgment, and the scourge is already raised, which will fall upon the generation living at present (i. 1–11). But it is a revelation of the righteousness of Jehovah, which is to be executed, and which will strike the destroyer as well as every sinful being upon earth. At the last the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah and keep silence before Him. With this the prophet consoles believers (i. 12–ii. 20). As in Micah, so here also the dialogue falls into a hymn artistically constructed after the manner of the Psalms (chap. iii.), which, according to the model of the old sacred national songs, and in the form (which from these has become customary) of a wonderfully glorious theophany, celebrates the judgment of God upon the heathen, and, in connection with it, the salvation of Israel.

By the liturgical additions at the beginning and the end this hymn was appointed for public performance in the temple; as may be seen also from the recurrence of the Selah, which is characteristic of liturgical hymns.

As concerns the form of the prophetical language of this book, "it is classical throughout, full of rare and select words and turns, which are to some extent exclusively his own, whilst his view and mode of presentation bear the seal of independent force and finished beauty. Notwithstanding the violent rush (which is yet more regular than in Nahum) and lofty soaring of the thoughts, his prophecy forms a finely organized and artistically rounded whole." (Delitzsch.) But the lyric ring of the language throughout, in which he unites the power of Isaiah and the tender feeling of Jeremiah, is peculiar to himself.

[Keil, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, vol. i. p. 414: "The prophecy of Habakkuk is clothed in a dramatic form, man questioning and complaining, God answering with threatening. It announces as nearest of all, the impending fearful judgment by the instrumentality of the Chaldæans on the theocracy because of its prevailing moral corruption (chap. i.); and next to this, in a fivefold woe, the downfall of this arrogant, violent, God-forgetting, and idolatrous offender (chap. ii.); and it concludes with the answer of the believing Church to this twofold divine revelation, — that is to say, with a prophetico-lyric echo of the impressions and feelings produced in the prophet's mind — (1) by these two divine relations when pondered in the light of the Lord's great doings in times past [ch. iii.] (2)."

"(1) Comp. the admirable development of the contents of this prophecy, and of its organic articulation as it forms an indivisible whole, in Delitzsch, *Comm.* There is now no more need of refuting the contrary opinions (proceeding from utter want of understanding) of Kalinsky, p. 145 ff.; of Friedrich in Eichhorn, *Allg. Biblioth.*, x. p. 420 ff.; of Horst, *Visionen*

Hab., pp. 31–32; of Rosenmüller, of Maurer, and others, that the book contains various discourses of various dates. The same may be said of the assertion of Hamaker, p. 16 ff., that the first discourse is only a fragment.

"(2) Hence it leans in manifold ways on the older songs and psalms, and reproduces their thoughts (Deut. xxxiii. 2; Judg. v. 4, 5; Ps. lxviii. 8, 9), but especially on Ps. lxxvii. 16–21; comp. Delitzsch, *Hab.*, p. 118 ff." — C. E.]

II. *Date.*

The unity of the book, which the exegesis will hereafter have to confirm, is shown by the very statement of the contents. If we then inquire concerning the circumstances, under which the prophecy arose, we must reject, at the outset, the arbitrary attempts at division into parts by Rosenmuller, and Maurer, according to whom a chronological intercalation, namely, the invasion of the Chaldæans, should be made between chaps. i. and ii. The dialogue is continued beyond the beginning of chap. ii. Also for the gradual chronological progress, which Hitzig finds indicated in the book (that the enemy is approaching, chap. i.; that he is present, chap. iii.), there is neither a firm support, nor a psychological possibility of conceiving it. The [command to] "Keep silence before Jehovah" (ii. 20), is evidently an introduction to the hymn, in which the prophecy culminates. While the woes ii. 6 ff., which do not exhibit the judgment itself, but its necessity, are still sounding over the earth, the world is summoned to listen to Him, whose coming the hymn announces.

One may accordingly, without danger of error, assume a single point of time for the composition. But when is this to be sought? Finding that Habakkuk puts emphasis on that which is unexpected and wonderful in the announcement, which he (i. 5) certainly utters with great stress, many interpreters have been induced to maintain, that he must have prophesied at a time, when there was not even the most distant suspicion that any calamity was to be apprehended from the Chaldæans. Now in 2 Kings xxi. 10 ff. (comp. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10), it is expressly stated, that under Manasseh (698–643), the successor of Hezekiah, the prophets announced the approach of a terrible calamity, at which the ears of the people should tingle. Among these prophets accordingly Habakkuk may be numbered; and this may be the situation [of things] in which he wrote. This opinion of Wahl, Jahn, Hävernick, and others, Keil also declares the most probable. But should the incredible circumstance of the prophecy lie in the fact that it speaks of the Chaldæans, then to refer its date to the time of Manasseh would not be sufficiently in keeping with this view. Already under Hezekiah, his predecessors (Micah iv. 10, and Isaiah xxxix. 23, 13) had foreseen the power of the Chaldæans. The incredibility lies rather in the *presently impending* approach of the Chaldæans: and the narrative (Jer. xxxvi. 9–32), proves that this, until immediately before their first invasion of Palestine, in the time of Jehoiakim, was considered something incredible and not to be announced. And in the calamity predicted by the prophets in the time of Manasseh, the chronicler perceives already the expedition of Assarhaddon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11; compare ver. 10). (Compare, moreover, Introd. to Nahum, p. 4 f., and Movers, *Chronik.*, p. 327 ff.) Moreover the energy of the prophetic words (i. 5) is a peculiarity of prophetic diction, and affords no ground for supporting the historical date; but rather the adjoined clause, "in your days," which is to be read in the same verse, and which has here a special emphasis (comp. Ez. xii. 25) in the mouth of the prophet, proves, as Delitzsch acknowledges, that this prophecy must be placed considerably nearer the catastrophe of which it treats, than the reign of Manasseh, which was separated from the invasion of the Chaldæans by more than a generation. It is besides hardly conceivable, how just in the time of Manasseh, in which the worship of Jehovah was forced to give way to idolatry (2 Chron. xxxiii. 4 f.; 2 Kings xxi. 4 f.), Habakkuk should have composed the psalm, chap. iii., for the public service: it [the psalm] rather presupposes that the ecclesiastical reforms of Josiah (641–610) had already taken root in the popular life. Add to this, finally, that the Chaldæans are not merely mentioned, but their wild appearance and their vast success are described with an exactness and fullness, from which it is evident that the powerful nation was, in the time of the prophet, already on the way and had acquired for itself a terrible name. This last argument contravenes the opinion of Vitringa, Delitzsch, and others, who would like to place this prophecy at least in the age of Josiah. Further, the description of the public life, with which Habakkuk (i. 2–4) introduces the announcement of the judgment, is opposed to this second date. For should the prophecy fall in the time of Josiah, it would fall either before,

or after his reforms. The former is impossible, since it presupposes, as observed above, the reform of worship. But if it is placed after the reform, then the description of the ruined condition of Israel, could not, as Delitzsch thinks, be so understood that the reforms introduced a time of winnowing and consequently a strong contrast between the godless and the righteous; for Habakkuk says nothing of such a contrast, but he speaks of a perversion of justice, which, in the nature of the case, does not come from below, but from above: his address (i. 2 ff.; as also in chap. ii. 9 ff. again) is directed against those in high authority. Finally the words, "in your days," if spoken in the time of Josiah, would be in direct contradiction to the prophecy of the prophetess Huldah (2 Kings xxii. 18 ff.), according to which the calamity was not to fall upon Judah in the lifetime of Josiah. Nothing remains, therefore, but to place this prophecy in the reign of Jehoiakim (610–599). So De Wette, Ewald, Umbreit, Hitzig, Bäumlein, Bleck.

Indeed all the circumstantial evidence is also in favor of this time. Babylon had suddenly risen as from nothing [*dem Nichts*, the nothing, *Kenōma* — C. E.], in the time of Jehoiakim, by the overthrow of Nineveh (comp. Introd. to Nahum iv.), to the summit of power. It was a spectacle in which Nahum also perceived a stupendous act of God. Taking advantage of the complications in Mesopotamia, Necho King of Egypt had already previously set out, seized the kingdoms on the Mediterranean, and had deprived King Josiah, who manfully opposed him in the battle of Megiddo (vi. 10), of throne and life; had also carried away Jehoahaz, his legitimate successor to the throne, into Egypt, and put in his place Jehoiakim, a weak and impious man, as King over Judah (2 Kings xxiii. 37–xxiv. 4). His expeditions advanced continually onward, whilst the Babylonian and Median armies were held fast before Nineveh; and already had he pushed forward to the Euphrates, when Nineveh fell. Immediately Nebuchadnezzar marched against him with his Babylonians exulting in victory, annihilated, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, B. C. 605, the Egyptian power at Carchemish (Circesium) on the Euphrates (Jer. xlvi. 2; Jos., *Ant.*, x. 6, 1), and pursued the fugitives even to the borders of Egypt. That during this career of victory Jehoiakim also, the creature of Necho, did not escape without trouble, is not merely probable and to be inferred from the direction of the march, but by the numerous allusions in Jeremiah, as well as by 2 Kings xxiv. 1, and Dan. i. 2, certain. (That Daniel mentions the third year of Jehoiakim instead of the fourth, has its ground probably in a different system of calculation; comp. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass. u. Babels S.*, 327 [*Hist. Ass. and Babylon*, p. 327]).

It is now certain that Habakkuk prophesied before this invasion of the Babylonians, for as yet Jerusalem is in a state of secure and godless infatuation (i. 2 ff.). Just as certain is it that his prophecy does not refer to that alone: it embraces the whole Chaldæan oppression, which found its consummation in the year 588. But if we inquire more specially for the definite time of his prophecy within the years 610–605, then it, as also the scene described Jer. xxxvi. 9 ff., must be placed in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and *immediately* before the battle of Carchemish. Only from this situation, in which the distress is certainly already approaching (comp. the fast, Jer. xxxvi. 9, which was at all events appointed upon Necho's[1] arrangement), a situation in which the decisive blow had not yet fallen, there being still good confidence in Jerusalem, can both the following circumstances be understood: namely, that Habakkuk proclaims his message as something incredible — (it was indeed incredible that the power of the Egyptians regarded, since the battle of Megiddo, as invincible, should be overthrown by this people of yesterday) — and that Jehoiakim causes the similar message of Jeremiah to be destroyed as treason — (had the battle of Carchemish been fought, then the message of Jeremiah was not only no treason, but such as one might expect); and also, that Habakkuk had sufficient reason to describe the Chaldæans in the manner in which he has done, i. 6 ff. Compare on i. 11. That in the time between Josiah's death and the fall of Necho such a state of things, as described in Hab. i. 2 ff. must have existed in Jerusalem, is considering the character of Jehoiakim, the Vassal-prince, who was reigning illegally [*wider das Recht*, contrary to right], more than probable. And as the old laconic rabbinical document (*Seder Olam rabba*, c. 24) records the great deeds of Nebuchadnezzar; "in the first year he overthrew Nineveh, in the second, Jehoiakim;" it thus affords a beautiful parallel to the consecutive prophecies of Nahum and Habakkuk.

Against the date just given, Delitzsch urges the coincidences between Habakkuk and the

1 [There is no intimation in Jer. xxxvi. 9 that Necho had anything to do with the fast. See Lange's *Com. on Jer.* xxxvi. 9. — C. E.]

prophecies of Zephaniah and Jeremiah written in the time of Josiah. In relation to Zephaniah, only the passage, ii. 20, comp. Zeph. i. 7, "keep silence before the Lord," comes into consideration. However the proof based upon conformity of sound is always two-edged, therefore relatively without edge. If it must be conceded that Zephaniah has very many passages from older prophets, it does not at all follow from this, that he must be pressed down to such a measure of dependence, that he has nothing original, and that wheresoever he coincides with another prophet he is always the borrower. Or will Delitzsch on account of Zeph. i. 18 (comp. Ezek. vii. 19), make Ezekiel also prophecy before Zephaniah? And if Delitzsch urges the more detailed form of the sentence [*des Spruchs*, sentence, judgment], in Habakkuk as a proof of originality, then there is no ground to deviate, in Habakkuk, from the common principle of criticism, that the briefer passage has for itself the prejudice in favor of the higher antiquity. On the one hand, it is not in the fact that he would generally be absolutely original, which Delitzsch himself in regard to the passages ii. 1–13; iii. 18 (which might be easily multiplied) (comp. Micah iii. 10; Is. xi. 9; Micah vii. 7), must grant; and on the other hand, he is indeed also in regard to other prophets a borrower, who enriches what he borrows; comp., *e. g.*, ii. 15 ff. with Nah. iii. 11; ii. 1–4 with Is. xxviii. 16. If finally Delitzsch thinks that he can draw a proof for the higher antiquity of Habakkuk from the fact that in Zephaniah a decline of the prophetic originality is manifested, still this subjective observation even according to the opinion of Delitzsch does not proceed upon a chronological ground — for he can, at the most, fix a difference of six years between their prophecies — but upon an individual [ground]. Just as the coincidences with Zephaniah, so also those with Jeremiah are capable of a double turn. There is no reason whatever why the leopards (Hab. i. 8), should be more original than the eagles (Jer. iv. 13), and why the wolves of the desert (Jer. v. 6), should be later than the evening wolves (Hab. i. 8), which besides referring to Ps. lix. are perhaps borrowed from Zeph. iii. 3.

But the argument, which, in the opinion of Delitzsch, is most conclusive, namely, that if Habakkuk had predicted the Chaldæan catastrophe so long before it happened, a proof of the inspiration of his prophecy is derived from this prophetic power, is not, on several grounds, determinative. First, because it is an argument *ex utilitate*. Next, because it does not at all need this: we have an argument belonging here in Is. xxxix., which even invalidates the one offered by Delitzsch, since Habakkuk would take up again and continue Isaiah. Finally, from the fact that prophets predicted future events long beforehand (to deny which in these days is nothing new), a proof of inspiration is derived only for him who is entirely skeptical in regard to the divination of the heathen and its verification, which is not seldom elevated above all opposition. The proof of inspiration lies not merely in the gift of foretelling indididual temporal events, but much deeper. (Comp. Düsterdieck, *De Rei Propheticæ, in V. T. natura ethica*, Gott., 1852). If Habakkuk had written only the single declaration ii. 4, it would have afforded a stronger proof of his inspiration to him who believes, than if he had foretold, in the time of Abraham, the fall of Babylon. But to him who is not open to conviction, even the proof from foretelling events, at such a distance, is of no value, as Delitzsch himself might see from the contemptible treatment which his honest labor had to endure from Hitzig. Comp. *infra*, p. 15.

[According to the contents of the prophecy, Habakkuk prophesied before the invasion of Palestine by the Chaldæans.

1. Vitringa, Delitzsch, Küper, and others refer his prophecy to the time of Josiah, between 650 and 627 before Christ: —

(*a*) According to chap. i. 5, about 20–30 years before the Chaldæan invasion (Delitzsch);

(*b*) According to chap. ii. 20, compared with Zeph. i. 7, shortly before Zephaniah (Küper, Caspari);

(*c*) According to chap. i. 8 compared with Jer. iv. 13 and v. 6, before the appearance of Jeremiah, consequently before the 13th year of Josiah (Keil, Introd.).

2. According to some Rabbins, Witsius, Buddeus, Carpzov, Wahl, Kofod, Jahn, Hävernick, Keil (*Comm.*), Habakkuk prophesied in the time of Manasseh.

3. According to Stickel, Jäger, Knobel, Maurer, Ewald, De Wette, Kleinert, during the advance of Nebuchadnezzar, in the time of Jehoiakim.

4. According to Eichhorn, Bertheau, Justi, Wolf, and others, in the time of the devastation of the land of Judah by the Chaldæans, so that the prophecy of Habakkuk would be only a *vaticinium ex eventu*. Hertwig's *Tabellen*. C. E.]

[Lenormant and Chevallier date the prophecy of Habakkuk in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when Necho, King of Egypt, was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish. Vol. i. p. 186. — C. E.]

III. *Author.*

If Habakkuk, as we have shown, prophesied under Jehoiakim, then of course he could have been still living, when Daniel was cast into the lions' den. Notwithstanding the apocryphal narrative of [Bel and the] Dragon, which (ver. 33 ff.) causes him to be carried by an angel to Babylon, to the martyr, has, judging from its whole character, little probability, yet it is so far interesting, as it shows how even the old Jewish tradition removes the ministry of the prophet to the very closest proximity to the Chaldæan catastrophe. Moreover, Delitzsch also thinks that the superscription of this apocryphon in the LXX. (Cod. Chisianus): Ἐκ προφητείας Ἀμβακοὺμ υἱοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐκ τῆς φύλης Λευΐ, can be turned to good account for the purpose of determining the circumstances of the prophet's life. He combines it with the rubric at the end of the psalm (chap. iii. 19) in which the prophet directs that the hymn, when sung, be accompanied by *his* stringed instrument. From that circumstance Delitzsch (and after him Keil) concludes that Habakkuk must have been officially authorized to participate in the temple-music, and must accordingly have been a Levite. But this does not follow from the notice iii. 19; we read that King Hezekiah also, who was no Levite, declared that he would sing in the temple with his stringed instrument (Is. xxxviii. 20); consequently this practice in public worship was not confined to the Levites. Thus the assumption is based simply upon that direction [that the hymn should be accompanied in its performance by his stringed instrument], and is the more questionable, as it may possibly owe its origin to some ancient, who led the way to the conclusion of Delitzsch: another tradition refers Habakkuk to the tribe of Simeon. (Compare this and similar synagogal-Christian traditions in the careful critical collection of Delitzsch, *De Habacuci Proph. vita et Ætate*). Whether the grave of Habakkuk, which continued to be pointed out in the days of Eusebius and Hieronymus (*Onom.*, ed. Parsow et Parthey, 128 ff.) between Keila and Gabatha, was the true one, cannot be affirmed with certainty.

For more certain data concerning the circumstances of his life, we are consequently directed entirely to his book; and this furnishes us with no information, apart from the characteristic condition of the time, except his name and the notice that he was a prophet (i. 1; iii. 1). The name Habakkuk is formed, according to an elsewhere occurring derivation, by the reduplication of the third radical and an inserted shurck (שְׁפַרוּר נַעֲצוּץ, etc., Olsh., sec. 187 b from the root חבק, to embrace. (Compare Luther, below.) The Masoretic punctuation exhibits the phenomenon common to all languages, that proper names frequently deviate, in the manner of writing them, from the rule of the customary orthography. According to the analogy of the related forms it should be pointed חֲבַקּוּק. Besides daghesh forte euphonicum has not always been read in the ק, but, *e. g.*, by the LXX in the ב; hence the rendering Ἀμβακούμ, in which it [ב] is represented by μ, a sound more euphonious to the Greek. The final μ of this form is repeated from the close of the antepenult, because it was dissonant to the Greek ear to begin and end a syllable with the same consonant. In the same way, בַּעַל זְבוּב has been rendered Βεελζεβοὺλ (Hitzig).

IV. *Place in the Organism of Scripture.*

As Nahum is important in the succession of prophecy in that he concludes the Assyrian series; so is Habakkuk in that he (with Jeremiah) begins the Babylonian (comp. Obadiah, p. 11). The description of the Chaldæan runs parallel with that of the Assyrian (Is. v.) On the other hand, chap. 3 fits into the series of the Old Testament theophanies, which, resting upon the first coming of Jehovah to give the law, describe his second coming to vindicate it, and it forms a conclusion to this method [of describing his coming]. From the time of the exile onward the coming of God to judgment is represented no more in the form of the theophany, but in that of the apocalypse.

But alongside of the external importance of the book there is an internal one. The ground lines of the kingdom of God, as they come to light in the divine economy of the world, are in few prophets so strongly marked as in Habakkuk. The character, in which

the world-power enters into the circle of God's administration of his kingdom and becomes an object of the judgment, is fully delineated in the three sentences, that are complementary to each other, namely, from him emanate his right and his majesty (i. 7); his soul is puffed up, it is not right in him (ii. 4); he is guilty, whose power is his god (i. 11). The sovereign insolence of self-glory, which in pure arrogance puts itself in the place of God as judge upon earth, is the cause of the judgment: thereby all the temporal manifestations of that which is opposed to God, from Gen. xi. until the time of the end are judged. Again, the characteristics of the fate of the kingdom are given in the sentences: the just shall live by his steadfast faith (ii. 4); I must wait calmly for the day of affliction (iii. 16); I will rejoice in God my salvation (iii. 18). The way of him, who stands fast upon the Word of God, — a way marked by humility and fidelity — must lead to salvation. It is the mutual relation of the stability of the divine word (ii. 3) and of the stability of him who perseveres in it, whereby the solidarity[1] between God and the subjects of his kingdom, which is indicated by the name קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל (i. 12), and whereby the impotence and self-destructive character of all attacks directed against this mutual covenant, are characterized. But from the spiritual nature of these definitions [*Bestimmungen*, defined objects] arises a spiritual limitation of the idea of Israel. It is no longer the Israel according to the flesh, to whom the promise avails in its full extent: they [Israel according to the flesh] are the object of the Divine judgment, as well as the Babylonians (i. 2 ff.; ii. 9 ff.); but it is the Israel according to the spirit, the just by faith, who are separated by the judgment out of the mass of external Israel (i. 12). With clear penetration Paul, when it was his object to place in the light this difference in its New Testament fulfillment, set his foot directly upon the Old Testament foundation of this prophet. One does wrong to the epoch-forming significance of this prophet, if he restricts his book merely to the import of a book of consolation. With similar precision is the character also of the judgment of purification delineated: Thou, rock, hast appointed him, the enemy, for instructive chastisement (i. 12). And out of the old conception of the holiness of God, according to which it (holiness) is his relation to the elect people (i. 12), the new conception, which is ethical in its elements, struggles forth. Thou *canst* not look calmly upon evil (i. 13). Next to Isaiah xl. ff. Habakkuk is the most powerful evangelist among the prophets.

Concerning the coincidences with earlier prophets compare ii. above. They are more numerous than in Nahum, however proportionally few. On the other hand, a rich acquaintance with the Psalms is a characteristic of this prophet, as it is of Micah and Nahum, a characteristic corresponding to the lyric character of the book. On this point compare the Exegetical Exposition, chap. iii.

His place in the Canon is justified not only by the close relationship of the contents to those of Nahum, but also by the inscription: just as the *massaim* are placed together in the book of Isaiah, so also are they in the book of the Minor Prophets. Luther[2]: Habakkuk has a right name for his office. For Habakkuk means an embracer, or one who takes another in his arms and presses him to his heart. This he does in his prophecy: he embraces his people and takes them in his arms, *i. e.*, he comforts them and holds them up, as one embraces a weeping child or person, to quiet him with the assurance, that, if God will, he will be better.

5. *Literature.*

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1 [Solidarity: the mutual obligation of all to each and of each to all. — C. E.]

2 Luther's *Commentary on Habakkuk* (Erfurt, 1526) affords the peculiar historical interest, in that it is directed throughout in a polemic manner, against the nobility and the bishops, who barbarously made the most of their victory over the insurrectionary peasants. In the extracts given below this reference is of course left out.

Visions of Habakkuk], Gotha, 1798. K. W. Justi, *Der Prophet Habakuk übersetzt und erklärt* [The Prophet Habakkuk translated and interpreted], Lpz., 1821. A. A. Wolff, *Der Prophet Habakuk* [The Prophet Habakkuk], Darmst., 1822. G. L. Bäumlein, *Comm. de Habacuci Vaticinio,* Maulbr., 1840, 4to. F. Delitzsch, *Der Prophet Habakuk ausgelegt* [The Prophet Habakkuk interpreted], Lpz., 1843. Jo. Gumpach, *Der Prophet Habakuk nach dem genau revidirten Text erklärt* [The Prophet Habakkuk interpreted according to the accurately revised text], Münch., 1860. A. Schröder, on chap. iii., *Diss. in Cant. Habacuci.* Gera., 1787. Ch. F. Schnurrer, *Diss. phil. ad Carmen Hab. iii.,* Tub., 1786, 4to. J. G. Herder, *Gebet Habakuks des Propheten, im Geist der hebr. Poesie* [Prayer of the Prophet Habakkuk, in the spirit of Hebrew Poetry], WW., 1827, ii. 176 ff. K. G. Anton, *Cap. iii. Hab. Versio,* etc., Gorlic., 1810, 4to. Stickel, *Prolusio ad Cap. 3 Hab.,* Neustadt, 1827. L. Hirzel, *Ueber die hist. Deutung von Hab. iii.* 3–15; in Winer u. Engelhardt, *Neues krit. Journal* [Concerning the Historical Interpretation of Hab. iii. 3–15; in Winer and Engelhardt, New Critical Journal], 1827, vii., 4to. Sommer, *Bibl. Abhandlungen* [Biblical Dissertations], i. 1 ff.

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HABAKKUK.

CHAPTER I.

[*The Prophet commences by setting forth the Cause of the Chaldæan Invasion, which forms the Burden of his Prophecy. This Cause was the great Wickedness of the Jewish Nation at the Time he flourished* (vers. 2–4). *Jehovah is introduced as summoning Attention to that Invasion* (ver. 5). *The Prophet describes the Appearance, Character, and Operations of the Invaders* (vers. 6–11).—C. E.]

1 The burden, which Habakkuk the prophet saw.

2 How long, Jehovah, do I cry?
And thou hearest not?
I cry to thee, Violence,
And thou helpest not.

3 Why dost thou let me see wickedness?
And [why] dost thou look upon distress?
Oppression and violence are before me;
And there is strife, and contention exalts itself.

4 Therefore the law is slack;[1]
Justice no more[2] goes forth;
For the wicked compass about the righteous;
Therefore justice goes forth perverted.

5 Look among the nations and see!
And be ye amazed,[3] be amazed;
For I am about to work[4] a work in your days:
Ye will not believe it, though it were told.

6 For behold![5] I am about to raise up the Chaldæans,
That bitter and impetuous nation,
Which marches over the breadths of the earth,
To take possession of dwelling-places, that do not belong to it.

7 It is terrible and dreadful:
Its right and its eminence proceed from itself.

8 And swifter than leopards are its horses,
And speedier than the evening wolves:
Its horsemen spring[6] proudly along,
And its horsemen come from afar:
They fly like an eagle hastening to devour.

9 It comes wholly for violence:
The host[7] of their faces is forward;
And it collects captives like the sand.

10 And it scoffs at kings;
And princes are a laughter to it:
It laughs at every stronghold,
And heaps up earth and takes it.

11 Then its spirit revives,[8]
And it passes on and contracts guilt:
This its strength is its god.

GRAMMATICAL AND TEXTUAL.

[1 Ver. 4.— תָּפוּג תּוֹרָה. The primary idea of תָּפוּג is that of stiffness, rigidity, *i. e.* frigid and cold, cold and stiff being kindred terms. Compare the Greek πηγ-νυω, to be stiff. Trop. *to be torpid, sluggish, slack: friget lex.*

[2 Ver. 4.— וְלֹא־יֵצֵא לָנֶצַח מִשְׁפָּט may be rendered: *judgment goeth not forth according to truth.* Ges. But לָנֶצַח signifies also, *to perpetuity, forever;* and connecting it with לֹא it gives the meaning of *not forever,* or *never.* See Keil. LXX.: Καὶ οὐ διεξάγεται εἰς τέλος κρίμα; Vulgate: *et non pervenit usque ad finem judicium;* Luther: *und kann keine rechte Sache gewinnen;* Kleinert: *und nicht fällt nach Wahrheit der Rechtsspruch.*

[3 Ver. 5.— וְהִתַּמְּהוּ תְּמָהוּ. Double form, used for intensity. Compare Isaiah xxix. 9. The combination of the kal with the hiphîl of the same verb serves to strengthen it, so as to express the highest degree of amazement.

[4 Ver. 5.— פֹּעַל denotes that which is immediately at hand. Green's *Heb. Gram.*, sec. 266, 2. Nordheimer, sec. 1034, 3 a.

[5 Ver. 6.— כִּי־הִנְנִי מֵקִים, *ecce suscitaturus sum.* הִנְנִי before the participle refers to the future.

[6 Ver. 8.— וּפָשׁוּ from פּוּשׁ, signifying *to be proud, to show off proudly;* hence of a horseman leaping proudly and fiercely. The subject of this verb, פָּרָשָׁיו, may be translated *horses.* See Ges., s. v.

[7 Ver. 9.— מְגַמַּת פְּנֵיהֶם קָדִימָה. I have followed Gesenius in the translation of these words. LXX.: ἀνθεστηκότας προσώποις αὐτῶν ἐξεναντίας; Vulgate: *facies eorum ventus urens;* Luther: *reissen sie hindurch wie ein Ostwind;* Kleinert: *die Gier ihrer Angesichter strebt nach vorwarts.*

[8 Ver. 11.— אָז חָלַף רוּחַ, *then his spirit revives.* Ges. LXX.: τότε μεταβαλεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα; Vulgate: *Tunc mutabitur spiritus;* Luther: *Alsdann werden sie einen neuen Muth nehmen;* Keil: Then it passes along a wind; Kleinert: *Dann wendet es sich, ein sturmwind;* Henderson: *it gaineth fresh spirit.* — C. E.]

EXEGETICAL.

In the heading (comp. the Introd.) this prophecy is designated as a מַשָּׂא, sentence: compare on Nah. i. 1. If it should there, as in Is. xiii. ff., on account of the subjoined genitive of relation, still seem doubtful, whether the prophecy should not be taken as a burden prepared against Nineveh, Babylon, etc., so here, where this genitive is wanting and the discourse has certainly in it that which pertains to a burden, but still much more of that which is consolatory, the neuter signification of the word is just as plain as in Jeremiah, Zechariah, and in the appendix to the Proverbs The verb חָזָה, which, according to its original signification, "to see," would seem incapable of being joined with *Massâ*, can be used with it, because "to see," the most common expression for the prophetic intuition and conception, is generally employed to denote prophetic activity [*die prophetische Thätigkeit*, the exercise of the prophetic gift. — C. E.]

The "vision" of Isaiah (chap. i. ver. 1) embraces threatenings, complaints, consolatory addresses, and symbolical actions. There is just as little ground to deny that the heading proceeds from the prophet himself, as there is in regard to the subscription (chap. iii. ver. 19), in which the prophet speaks of himself in the first person. Accordingly it is a general, and that of chap. iii. a special heading.

[Keil: "Ver. 1 contains the heading, not only to chap. i. and ii., but to the whole book, of which chap. iii. forms an integral part. On the special heading in chap. iii. ver. 1, see the commentary on the verse. The prophet calls his writing a *massâ*, or burden (see at Nahum i. 1), because it announces heavy judgments upon the covenant nation and the imperial power." — C. E.]

First Dialogue. Vers. 2–11. In this conversation, as in the concluding passages of Micah, the function of the prophet is exhibited on two sides. He speaks, first, in the name of the true Israel, as an advocate of righteousness (comp. on Micah vii. 1); then in the name of God. Hence the discourse takes the form of a dialogue, and is divided into two parts.

I. *The Complaint.* The prophet in the name of righteousness accuses the people of sin (vers. 2–4).

II. *The Answer.* God points to the scourge, by which this sin is to be punished (vers. 5–11).

Vers. 2–4. *The Complaint.* Parallel with Micah vii., the prophet begins with the description of the wretched condition of the country, which urgently calls for judgment. That he is not yet speaking of the violent deeds of the Chaldæans (Rosenmüller, Ewald, Maurer), but of the con-

dition of Judah itself, is evident from the analogy of the language to the descriptions of other prophets, as well as from the fact that the calamity to be inflicted by the Chaldæans (ver. 5 ff.) is described as a future one, at present past all belief (comp. ver. 13). **How long,** properly until when, **Jehovah,** — thou covenant God, who hearest those that call [upon Thee] and art angry with the wicked, — **do I cry, and thou hearest not; — cry to thee, violence, — and thou helpest not?** *Chāmās* is not acc. modi, but objecti: a customary form of expression (comp. Jer. xx. 8, and Job xix. 7). We have the same construction in our [the German] language. The tone is that of complaint, common also in the Psalms, with a gentle sound of reproach (Ps. xxii. 2 ff.; lxxxviii. 15 ff.), such as only the ideal congregation, which sees in actual sin an injury done to its vocation [*ihrer Bestimmung*, that for which a thing is designed — C. E.] can raise, but not the individual fellow-sinner and accomplice in guilt.

Ver. 3. **Why** (thus the prophet assigns a reason for his calling and crying) **dost thou let me see iniquity, and lookest thou upon perverseness inactively?** Sc., since at least thou, as the Holy One, will not look upon it in Israel, and since, according to thy Word (Num. xxiii. 21). thy congregation are to remain free from it? עמל and און convey interchangeable ideas (comp. Hupf. on Ps. vii. 15); and the neuter עמל, which in itself may signify also distress (Bäumlein, Keil), receives here by means of the parallel און the meaning of mischief. [אָוֶן, R. און, signifies (1) *nothingness, vanity;* (2) *nothingness of words*, i. e., *falsehood, deceit;* (3) *nothingness* as to worth, *unworthiness, wickedness*, iniquity. עָמָל from עָמַל, *to labor*, signifies, (1) *labor, toil;* (2) *fruit of labor;* (3) *trouble, vexation, sorrow.* Gesenius, *Lex.* — C. E.]

Oppression and violence are before my eyes; and strife arises, and contention exalts itself. Where the powers are unequal there is oppression: where they are equal, the strife of hearts and tongues results in fighting with hands. To this description of the leading characteristics of a social disorder the question, "Why does He permit it to happen?" is to be supplied in thought from *a* [first clause of the verse. — C. E.]. יִשָּׂא is intransitive, as in Nahum i. 5; Ps. lxxxix. 10.

Ver. 4. **Therefore,** because thou dost not look into and restrain it, **the law,** "which was intended to be the soul and heart of the common political life" (Delitzsch), **is slack.** This is shown particularly (comp. Micah iii. 1 ff.) in the chief pillar of the public life, the administration of justice: **Yea a righteous sentence never comes forth.** So it should be translated, if we understand נצח according to the customary usage of the language: לא נצח, *i. e.*, not to perpetuity, not forever, *i. e.*, never (Is. xiii. 20, Delitzsch, Keil). But, as the adjunct מעקל, in the following part of the verse shows משפט means also here, as it does frequently, not materially a righteous judgment, but formally a legal sentence in general (Hos. x. 4). לנצח must consequently be uttered with emphasis; and the clause, "the sentence goes forth" לא לנצח, should form an antithesis to the clause, "the sentence goes forth perverted to injustice." To נצח, therefore, the signification of *truth, justice*, is required to be given (comp. לאמת Is. xlii. 3; Jer. v. 3). And this signification is possible. For the usual meaning perpetuity, stability, is not primitive, but has its inner ground in the fact that internal solidity is necessary to continuance; and this is undoubtedly evident from Prov. xxi. 28, though one may grant to Delitzsch, that the signification, forever (better to perpetuity), is not to be given up even in this passage. The connection of the meanings, and the transition from the concrete to the abstract are the same as in צדק. Compare also 1 Sam. xv. 29, where God, as He who cannot lie, is called נצח ישראל, and Lam. iii. 18. Schulteus has verified this meaning from the Arabic, *Animadvv.*, p. 515. Therefore [read]: *The sentence* [*or judgment*] *does not go forth according to truth*, so that it may have stability. Similarly, Hitzig, Bäumlein.

For the wicked man (to be understood collectively) **surrounds** [in a hostile sense — C. E.] **the righteous man:** to a whole circle of wicked men there is but one righteous, so that right bows under superior power (comp. Micah vii. 3): **therefore judgment goes forth perverted.** [Keil: *Mishpat* is not merely a righteous verdict, however; in which case the meaning would be: There is no more any righteous verdict given, but a righteous state of things, objective right in the civil and political life. — C. E.]

Vers. 5–11. *Jehovah's Answer* [to the preceding complaint — C. E]. The scourge is already prepared; and that a terrible one. **Look around among the nations and see.** רְאוּ בַ does not mean here, to look with delight, as it does in other places: the ב, moreover, does not enter simply into construction with the object, but it is local. Already has the storm burst forth among the nations, which also will overtake the secure sinners of Israel. **And be astonished! astonished!** The emphasis of the benumbing astonishment is expressed by the verb repeated in two conjugations (comp. Zeph. ii. 1; Ewald, sec. 313 c). The reason for both the summons to look round and for the stupefying consternation following it is indicated by the following כִּי: **for a work works,** is carried into effect (comp. ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται, 2 Thess. ii. 7), **in your days: ye would not believe it, if it were told to you,** it so far exceeds everything that can be imagined and expected. In order to transfer the emphasis entirely to the dreadful word, the speaker keeps back the author, and makes פעל apparently neuter: the impellent force is in the work itself (Ez. i. 20). [Keil: The participle פֹּעֵל denotes that which is immediately at hand, and is used absolutely, without a pronoun. According to ver. 6, אֲנִי is the pronoun we have to supply. For it is not practicable to supply הוּא, or to take the participle in the sense of the third person, since God, when speaking to the people, cannot speak of himself in the third person, and even in that case יְהוָֹה could not be omitted. Hitzig's idea is still more untenable, namely, that *pō'al* is the subject, and that *pō'ēl* is used in an intransitive sense: the work produces its effect. We must assume, as Delitzsch does, that there is a proleptical ellipsis, *i. e.*, one in which the word immediately following is omitted (as in Is. xlviii. 11;

Zech. ix. 17). The admissibility of this assumption is justified by the fact that there are other cases in which the participle is used and the pronoun omitted; and that not merely the pronoun of the third person (*e. g.*, Is. ii. 11; Jer. xxxviii. 23), but that of the second person also (1 Sam. ii. 24; vi. 3; and Ps. vii. 10). — C. E.]

Ver. 6 first mentions the doer: **For behold, I, the Lord, bring up** [am about to raise up — C. E.] **the Chaldæans.** [See Lenormant and Chevallier, vol. i. p. 472; also Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 58, and vol. ii. pp. 497, 505. — C. E.]. The expression בִּימֵיכֶם, and still more the immediately following description of the enemies themselves, point to the fact that they had already appeared in history. But that they are to appear in the history of Israel and come to execute judgment upon Judah for his sins, is, as the expression (הִנְנִי with the part.) shows, still in the future. And indeed the rapidity with which Babylon, which had just become independent, rose from being a city subject to Assyria to be the ruler of Asia, has something incredible. The nation, at whose head Nebuchadnezzar accomplished this sudden conquest, and whose great monarchy took the place of the Assyrian, is called in the Old Testament Casdim; and this designation stands, in the O. T., in the same reciprocal relation to Babylon, that Israel does to Jerusalem. The name Casdim, which, with the change of the second radical, has been preserved to this day in the name Kurds, and which appears in the Classics in the appellations Chalybes (*Il.*, ii. 856; comp. Strabo, xii. 545), Chaldi (Steph. Byz., s. v. Χαλδία) or Chaldæans (Ptolemæus, Strabo, Plinius, comp. Winer s. v. "Chaldäer," Ewald, *Hist. Isr.*, i. 333), Carduchi, or Gardyæi, belongs, according to the O. T. and the Classics to a tribe spread over the whole country between the Tigris and Pontus. Already in Jer. v. 15 the same people are designated as a very ancient one; and as early as Gen. xi. 28 the country of Mesopotamia is called after them Ur [Ur of the Chaldees], so that it is more than doubtful whether Chesed (Gen. xxii. 22), the nephew of Abraham, is to be considered their ancestor. If the conjecture of Ewald, Knobel, Dietrich, is correct that a reference to the name כשד already exists in Arphaxad [ארפכשד] Gen. x. 22), then this circumstance would doubtless refer the name to a time beyond that of Abraham. Oppert (*Deutsch.-morgenl. Zeitschr.*, German-Oriental Journal, xi. 137) has proved, that the word Cas-dim is Tataric, and signifies, as well as Mesopotamia, two rivers; and (the correctness of the translation being presupposed) it is legitimately inferred from this fact that the name probably designates the aboriginal Tataric population between the Euphrates and Tigris. (It harmonizes well with this etymology, according to which Casdim is plural only in sound but not in original signification, that the name appears in the O. T. only as plur. tantum; that Casdim as an actual plural form would be abnormally formed; that the regular plural form כַּשְׂדִּיִּים occurs only once in later Hebrew (Ez. xxiii. 14, Cthibh), and the reconstructed singular form כשדי only in the Aramaic of Daniel. [The opinion] that the aboriginal population of that district was, in fact, not of a Semitic, but of a Tataric stock, appears, at present, to be subjected no longer to any opposition. (Comp. Brandis, art. "Assyria" in Pauly's *Realencyklopädie*.) [On the early history of the Chaldæans and their Turanian origin, see Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. i. pp. 247, 248, 245, 533. — C. E.] Certainly opposed to this view is the assumption of the great majority of exegetes that the primitive abode of the Casdim was the Armenian mountain land, where, according to Xenophon, a brave and freedom-loving people of the Chaldæan stock dwelt, and where the Kurds still live, and that the Assyrians first settled them in the plain of Babylon, according to Hitzig in the year 625. This assumption, however, has, on closer examination, no broader foundation than a false, at the least a questionable interpretation of the obscure passage, Is. xxiii. 13: it is for that reason to be set aside. The present passage is the locus classicus for the characteristics of this warlike people, just as Is. v. 26 ff. is for the characteristics of the Assyrians. They are called **the people, the bitter,** *i. e.*, ferocious (comp. *Amarus*, *Cic. Att.*, 14, 21, and מַר נֶפֶשׁ, Judges xviii. 25) **and the impetuous,** properly hurrying on (Is. xxxii. 4), rushing on precipitately — the conformity of sound of the two adjectives has something terribly graphic — **which marches along** [Keil: ל is not used here to denote the direction, or the goal, but the space, as in Gen. xiii. 17 (Hitzig, Delitzsch) — C. E.] **the breadths of the earth,** which passes through the land in its whole extent (Judges viii. 8; Rev. xx. 9): **to take possession of dwelling places that are not its own** (comp. ii. 6).

Ver. 7. Carries out the idea of the "bitter;" and ver. 8, that of the "impetuous," in ver. 6. **It is terrible and fearful; from it** — not from God (Ps. xvii. 1) — **proceed its right and eminence:** in sovereign vain-glory it revived the old character of Babylon (Gen. xi. 4; comp. Is. xiv. 13), put its own statutes in the place of the jura divina, and consequently entered despotically into the place of the world-power, which is at strife with God. שְׂאֵת, an eminence, which rests upon inflated pride (נָשָׂא, Hos. xiii. 1), in contrast with the כָּבוֹד, which is bestowed by God. [Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. iii. pp. 10, 11. — C. E.]

Ver. 8. **And fleeter than leopards,** whose swiftness in catching the prey is proverbial, **are its horses** (Jeremiah employs in the same comparison the figure of the eagle, iv. 13); **yea they are swifter than evening wolves** (Zeph. iii. 3; comp. Ps. lix. 7, 15). The battle is to them, what the seizing of the prey is to a ravenous beast, — a savage delight, to which they hasten with impatience (Job xxxix. 20 f.). **And its horsemen rush along** (there is here also a graphic conformity of sound in the words); **yea its horsemen come from afar, they fly like the eagle, which hastens to devour.** [Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. iii. pp. 10, 11. — C. E.] They come to fulfill the curse (Deut. xxviii. 49), to the words of which the prophet alludes.

This thought is further carried out in ver. 9. **All its multitude** — the suffix ה, **contracted from** ־הוּ, is archaic, as in Gen. xlix. 11 — **comes for deeds of violence,** for the object is to inflict judgment for violence (ver. 2). **The eagerness** (in this sense the ἁπ. λεγ. מְגַמַּה, occurs in the Rabbins, Kimchi on Ps. xxvii. 8) **of their faces urges forward.** קָדִימָה, also in Ez. xi. 1; xlv. 7, for

קְדִמָה (Gen. xxv. 6). **And it gathers prisoners together like dust** (comp. Gen. xli. 49; Hos. ii. 9).

Ver. 10. Forms a fit sequel to the description of the autocratic power in ver. 7: **and it scoffs at kings, and princes are a derision to it,** for, 10 b, 11 a, it has the power to overcome every resistance: **it laughs at every stronghold, and heaps up dust and takes it.**

Ver. 11. **Then it turns a tempest** [Ges.: *then his spirit revives* — C. E.] **and passes on.** To mark the little anxiety, which the haughty enemy bestows upon the capture, the approaches are called עָפָר, heaped up dust, instead of the usual סֹלְלָה (2 Sam. x. 15, and above). The fem. suff. in יִלְכְּדָהּ, receives from the mas. מִבְצָר, **fortress,** the idea of a city [עִיר, which is fem. — C. E.] חָלַף nowhere means *revirescit,* not even in Ps. xc. 5, but it signifies a speedy gliding away, turning away (Job ix. 11; Ps. cii. 27), and unites, without violence, with עָבַר in expressing one idea. [See note 8 on ver. 11 — C. E.] רוּחַ is placed between as an appositional comparison (comp. Is. xxi. 8: and he cried, a lion, *i. e.*, with a lion's voice); there lies, indeed, in this apposition the threefold relative comparison of the revolving whirlwind, of rushing speed, and of demolishing power. A more descriptive expression of the astonishment at the invincible power of the Babylonian, who, immediately after the overthrow of Nineveh, marched against Necho, cannot be imagined. With a lofty elevation the prophet, 11 b, sets at naught this surging flood, and announces against the irresistible autocratic insolence of the enemy the unalterable decree of the Divine government [Governor] of the world, which, as in Micah and Nahum, concludes the description [of this haughty enemy — C. E.] with crushing effect: **But he is guilty,** and consequently incurs the Divine penalty, **whose power is his God.** That the accentuation incorrectly connects the verb אָשֵׁם with the first half of the verse, which, according to the sense, should be included in one verse with 10 b, is plain; for the immediate coördination of the verbs יַעֲבוֹר and אָשֵׁם, though retained by the exegetes, is certainly excluded by the dissimilar conjunctions (וַ, וְ). [וַיַּעֲבֹר has *vav conversive* of the future; and וְאָשֵׁם has *vav conversive* of the preterite — C. E.] [Other translations: LXX.: Καὶ διελεύσεται καὶ ἐξιλάσεται αὕτη ἡ ἰσχὺς τῷ θεῷ μου. Vulg.: "*Et pertransibit et corruet; hæc est fortitudo ejus dei sui.*" Drusius: "*Et transgredietur et delinquet, hanc vim suam Deo suo (tribuens).*" J. H. Michaelis: "*Et reum se faciet (dicens): hanc potentiam suam deberi Deo suo;*" or: "*Et tum luet (impius Judæus), cujus vis sua fuit pro Deo suo.*" Hitzig. Maurer: "And he loads himself with guilt; he, whose power becomes his god." Gesenius, Ewald, Delitzsch, Keil: "He passes on farther and offends; this his power becomes (is) his god." Bäumlein: "Since his power becomes his god]." לְ stands in the predicate of the object [*Prädicat der Abzielung,* the predicate denoting the purpose, object, or aim — C. E.] as in Nah. i. 7; Ex. vi. 7; זוּ rel. as in Is. xlii. 24 and other places. As appertaining to the thought, which, with special regard to ver. 7, briefly comprises the moral character of the conqueror with its immanent [inherent] destiny and makes both the basis of the following dialogue, comp. chap. ii. 6–10; Job xii. 6; Is. x. 13.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The inspiration of the prophets is rooted in the sacred soil of the heart, and presupposes the contest of faith and prayer with God, in which the struggling and praying soul experiences God's answer and blessing: a contest of faith and prayer like that of the patriarch, which stands at the beginning of the entire history of the holy people, who had the Spirit of God (Gen. xxxii. 24 ff.; comp. Hos. xii. 5 f.; Is. lxiii. 11). By this root of sanctification prophecy, among the people of Israel, is distinguished from all heathen divination, and not by the gift of the vision of future things. "Prophecy, as it speaks of future things, is almost one of the least important gifts, and comes sometimes even from the Devil." Luther on Rom. xii. 7 (comp. Ex. 7). It has in the O. T. its peculiar significance, which is to be understood from the light of the history of the kingdom; but separated from the heart of God it would be nothing. Comp. 1 Pet. i. 11; 2 Pet. i. 21.

The heathen powers shoot up into ascendency, when in the kingdom of God, the truth is impeded by pride, injustice, and a spirit of contention. On these they live like fungi, and God permits them to spring up, in order to begin the judgment upon his house. The more certainly that individuals, following their own view of what is good and right, pursue the war of the flesh instead of the Gospel of peace, the more certainly is the scourge already in preparation. What the prophet says of one event is put down in writing, because it is uttered for all time (Acts xiii. 41). The prudent man sees the evil and hides himself; but the silly man passes on and is punished. But even the most prudent man does not foresee it by his own prudence. God's decisive acts, as well those which He does as those which He permits, are altogether *Niphlaoth,* wonderful deeds, and have ever on one side something incredible in them. That they will come, he who has learned to examine the signs of the times in the light of God's Word, anticipates: how they are to be, God reserves to his own power. Enough, that we know that it is *His* power. To him, who knows this, there is no strange work in the world.[1]

1 Compare the letter of the French theosophist, St. Martin, concerning the Revolution, in Varnhagen, *Memoirs,* iv. 534 ff.: "I remind you of what I have written in the beginning of this letter, that the political commotions, in the storms of which we live, appear to me to be in the eye of God only the ways by which He is preparing us, as we think, for greater happiness. For the astonishing course of development of our grand revolution and the brilliant phenomena which mark it at every step, must show to every one, not devoid of understanding, or honesty, in its march of fire, the accomplishment of an express decree of Providence. We can even say that the work, on its part is already done, though not yet entirely on ours. Its hand, like that of a skillful surgeon, has removed the extraneous matter, and we feel all the inevitable effects of a painful operation and the pressure of the bandage of the wounds; but we must bear these pains with patience and courage, since there is none of them which does not conduce to our

For however high the scourge may be raised, the destroyer [*Zerbrecher*, dasher in pieces] is also appointed to it, as soon as he intends that it shall be more than a scourge, that chastisement shall be converted into destruction, the work of God into his own work. All [assumption of] independence is apostasy from God, consequently separation from the source of life. The [assumption of] independence on the part of Adam ended in curse and misery. The same thing on the part of ancient Babel ended in destruction, dispersion, and confusion. And so it falls out with the new destroyer, the destiny of his own guilt overwhelms him, because his power is his god. And in his time he who has crushed will himself be crushed. Kings and princes and strong cities are an object of derision to him: he is the same before God. Only he who continues in a state of grace, receives from God in perpetuity what was not his: thus Israel received Canaan. If he renounce the grace, he must also surrender the gift. If this applies to Israel (Micah ii. 10) how much more to the obstinate alien.

HOMILETICAL.

How utterly incomprehensible are the judgments of God!

1. Incomprehensible in their delay, to the view of those who have no patience, and think that God ought to act as speedily as their anger prompts them (vers. 2–3).

2. Incomprehensible in their threatening to those upon whom they will fall, and who nevertheless continue to sin in security (ver. 4).

3. Incomprehensible to every human mind in their realization. For—

(*a.*) They are greater than any human thought would anticipate (ver. 5).

(*b.*) They take place in ways and by means of which no man would dream (ver. 6).

(*c.*) They are often brought about by men and events that, at first sight, have nothing in common with God.

4. Incomprehensible in their grandeur and universality to those by whom they are accomplished (ver. 11).

On ver. 2. God always hears, although we do not have an immediate sense of it. Therefore continue in prayer. It is also not always good to pray to Him to hasten his help. The future help, which He has prepared, is perhaps, for the moment, heavier to bear than the present burden, under which thou sighest.—Ver. 3. He must certainly have his reasons, when He permits his saints to see misery and impious conduct. It touches his heart more than it does theirs. He suffers things to come to a crisis and the wicked thoughts of hearts to be revealed before He approaches [to judgment].—Ver. 5. However long we have searched after the way of God, when He is suddenly revealed in his might and power, then the light is so dazzling that it is painful to us, and we are displeased that God has performed such powerful deeds in our days, and that we have not rather come to our rest in peace.—Ver. 5. God has great power to destroy. Neither title-deed nor hereditary right protects against his power. He takes from whom He will and gives to whom He will. But He has still greater power and pleasure in building. The destruction is for a moment, the building for eternity. And in his destroying building is always included. With the stubble ploughed under, the field is manured for a new harvest; and the plough does not reap, but the ploughman.—Ver. 7. Ye who despise the right, when you can have it, need not wonder when you are treated as if there were no right, and when you shall be dealt with according to your own principle: *stat pro ratione voluntas.*—Ver. 10. When the judgments of God come, how quickly does everything on which men formerly placed their confidence and hope, fall to ruin! Then the earth, which was just now joyful, quakes.—Ver. 11. When God permits you to succeed in everything that comes to hand, it is no reason for pride, but for humiliation. All success cleaves to him who is proud, not as a merit, but as guilt, and God will require [the punishment of] the guilt.

LUTHER: On ver. 2. As if he would say, I preach much, and it is of no avail; my word is despised; no one becomes better; they only become continually worse. Therefore I know not where to bring my complaint except to Thee; but Thou seemest as if Thou hearest me not, and dost not see them. But the prophet does not expostulate with God, as his words would sound and intimate to the ear; but he speaks thus in order that he may alarm the people and bring them to repentance, and show them how deservedly the wrath and burden will come upon them, because they turn not at preaching, threatening, and exhortation, nor even at prayer, directed against them.—Ver. 3. This is written for our consolation and admonition that we should not wonder nor think it strange if few improve by our teaching. For generally preachers, especially if they have just newly come from the forge [seminary], indulge extravagant expectations [*meinen sie, das solle sobald Hände und Füsse haben, und flugs alles geschehen und geändert werden*, they think that everything should instantly have hands and feet, and that it should be immediately done and changed]. But that is a great mistake. Habakkuk rebukes the Jews, not on account of idolatry and other sins, but only on account of sins which were committed against their neighbors; there must, therefore, have been still at that time pious people, who maintained divine worship in its purity; but they were possessed with avarice and addicted to the practice of injustice and usury. So then no service, be it what it may, is pleasing to God, in which one does wrong to his neighbor.—Ver. 4. There are much worse villains than public thieves and rogues. For the latter act openly against the law, so that their wrong doing is palpable to and felt by every one; but the former pretend to be pious, and would have wrong considered right. There are therefore two kinds of villains: first, those who do wrong; secondly, those who set off and defend the same wrong under the name of right.—Ver. 5. All this is said also for us, who have the name and semblance of Christians, who boast of our baptism, or of our spiritual profession and office, as giving us the advantage over heathen and Jews, and yet we are, like them, without faith and the spirit: so that we also must certainly perish at last by those whom we now despise and consider worse than ourselves, just as it happened to the Jews by the Chaldæans.

recovery." See page 453: "When I consider the French Revolution from its origin onward, and at the moment when it broke out, I find nothing better to compare it to than to a picture on a reduced scale, of the last judgment, where the trumpets sound abroad the fearful notes, which a higher voice gives to them, where all the powers of heaven and earth are shaken; and where in one and the same moment the righteous and the wicked receive their reward."

— Ver. 6. It will be to you also of no avail that Jerusalem is the city and dwelling of God, to which you now trust: it is in vain, the Babylonian people will take possession of it altogether, though it is not their own. — Ver. 11. No human heart can refrain from pride and boasting, when it has success and good fortune. The Scriptures do not alone teach this; but also the heathen testify and acknowledge it from experience, as Virgil says: *nescia mens hominum servare modum rebus sublata secundis.* It is a common saying: a man can bear all things except prosperity.

STARKE: Ver. 2. Human weakness is the reason why we cannot reconcile ourselves to the wonderful government of God, and why we think that all evil might be easily remedied. But in this we forget that it is not according to wisdom to treat men, whom He has endowed with freedom of the will, with absolute omnipotence and as if they were machines. — Ver. 3. The ungodly exert themselves to the utmost in sinning. — Ver. 4. Even lawsuits are not unknown to God: He keeps also his record of them. — Ver. 5. God himself brings the enemy into the land, and punishes thereby all injustice. — Ver. 6. Those who sin in haste and are unwilling to be restrained are suddenly punished by God, and do not escape. — Ver. 8. God punishes the avarice of his people, who accumulate riches by injustice, in turn by the avarice of the soldiers, who plunder the unjustly acquired wealth and appropriate it to themselves. God can employ even the beasts, which at other times are compelled to render great service to men, for their punishment. — Ver. 10. Those who despise and laugh at pious teachers and their admonitions, justly deserve in their turn to be despised and laughed at.

PFAFF: Ver. 2 ff. Servants of God and preachers of the Gospel have reason to sigh over the prostration of faith in every quarter. Who can reproach them for thus sighing? But woe to you ungodly, who extort such sighs from them? — Ver. 5. Whence come war, bloodshed, and devastation? They come hence: justice is depressed and the law of God is violated.

RIEGER: On 2 ff. O God, into what times hast thou brought us? What must we see and experience? Where is the answer of all the prayer that has already for a long time been offered up for Divine help? These are also footsteps of faith in which we are often forced to tread.

SCHMIEDER: Ver. 4. The law becomes frigid, which, however, in its nature is fire and flame, and which, in the judgment, consumes sin. But where the judge is good for nothing, the law is frigid and lifeless.

BURCK: Ver. 5. Ye believe it not, if ye merely hear it, if ye are not furnished with conviction by sight. Much, if it is merely heard, does not work in the mind of man faith so much as doubt. It is a miracle worthy of God that men by the hearing of the Gospel attain to faith.

SCHLIER: Habakkuk understands very well what kind of a corrective such a people, insolent and eager for conquest, are; and, when all means are in vain, only such a fearful judgment by means of a foreign people can rouse once more a fallen nation. The Lord needs only to point him to the Chaldæans; thus he knows that this nation is the means in the hand of the Lord of setting bounds to the state of general distress.

TALM.: Ver. 7. Four men deified themselves and thereby brought evil upon themselves: Pharaoh, Hiram, Nebuchadnezzar, and Joash: the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar was divestiture of humanity.

BURCK: Ver. 9. Those who commit deeds of violence on one another (vers. 2, 3) deserve to experience them from others.

AUGUSTINE: Ver. 11. What art thou, O man, who puffest thyself up? Be contented to be filled. He who is filled is rich; he who puffs himself up is empty.

CHAPTERS I. 12–II. 20.

[*The Prophet expostulates with God on Account of the Judgment, which threatens the Annihilation of the Jewish People* (chap. i. vers. 12–17). *The waiting Posture of the Prophet* (chap. ii. ver. 1). *The Command to commit to Writing the Revelation which was about to be made to Him* (ver. 2). *Assurance that the Prophecy, though not fulfilled immediately, will certainly be accomplished* (ver. 3). *The proud and unbelieving will abuse it; but the believing will be blessed by it. The Prophet then depicts the Sins of the Chaldæans, and shows that both general Justice and the special Agencies of God's Providence will surely overtake them with fearful Retribution.* — C. E.]

12 Art thou not from eternity,
Jehovah, my God, my Holy One?
We shall not die.
Jehovah! for judgment thou hast appointed it;
And O Rock! Thou hast founded it for chastisement.

13 Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil;
Thou canst not look upon injustice.
Why lookest thou upon the treacherous?

Why art thou silent when the wicked destroys
Him that is more righteous than he?

14 And thou makest men like fishes of the sea,
Like reptiles that have no ruler.

15 All[1] of them it lifts up with the hook;
It gathers them into its net,
And collects them into its fish-net;
Therefore it rejoices and is glad.

16 Therefore it sacrifices to its net,
And burns incense to its fish-net;
Because by them its portion is rich,
And its food fat.

17 Shall he, therefore, empty his net,
And spare not to slay the nations continually?

CHAPTER II. 1 I will stand upon my watch[2]-post,
And station myself upon the fortress;
And I will wait[3] to see what He will say to [in] me,
And what I shall answer to my complaint.[4]

2 And Jehovah answered me and said:
Write the vision[5] and grave[6] it on tablets,
That he may run, who reads it.

3 For still the vision is for the appointed time;[7]
And it hastens to the end [fulfillment],
And does not deceive;
Though it delay, wait for it;
For it will surely come, and will not fail.

4 Behold the proud:
His soul is not right within him;
But the just by his faith shall live.

5 And moreover, wine is treacherous:
A haughty man, he rests not:
He who opens wide his soul like Sheol,
And is like death, and is not satisfied,
And gathers all nations to himself,
And collects all peoples to himself:

6 Will not all these take up a song[8] against him?
And a song of derision,[9] a riddle[10] upon him;
And they will say:
Woe to him who increases what is not his own!
How long?
And who loads himself with pledges.[11]

7 Will not thy biters[12] rise up suddenly,
And those awake that shall shake thee violently?
And thou wilt become a prey to them.

8 Because thou hast plundered many nations,
All the remainder of the peoples shall plunder thee;
Because of the blood of men and the violence done to the earth;
To the city and all that dwell in it.

9 Woe to him, that procureth wicked gain for his house!
To set his nest on high.
To preserve himself from the hand of calamity.

10 Thou hast devised shame for thy house;
Cutting off many peoples, and sinning against thyself.

11 For the stone cries out from the wall,
And the spar out of the wood-work answers it.

12 Woe to him, who builds a city with blood,
And founds a town in wickedness.

13 Behold, is it not from Jehovah of hosts,
That the peoples toil for the fire,
And the nations weary themselves for vanity?

14 For the earth shall be filled
With the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah,
As the waters cover the sea.

15 Woe to him that gives his neighbor to drink,
Pouring out thy wrath,[13] and also making drunk,
In order to look upon their nakedness.

16 Thou art sated with shame instead of glory;
Drink thou also, and show thyself uncircumcised:
The cup of Jehovah's right hand shall come round to thee,
And ignominy [14] shall be upon thy glory.

17 For the violence done to Lebanon shall cover thee,
And the destruction of wild beasts which terrifies [15] them:
Because of the blood of men, and the violence done to the earth,
To the city and all that dwell in it.

18 What profits the graven image, that its maker has carved it?
The molten image and the teacher of falsehood,
That the maker of his image trusts in him to make dumb [16] idols?

19 Woe to him that says to the wood, awake!
To the dumb stone, arise!
It teach! Behold it is overlaid with gold and silver;
And there is no breath in its inside.

20 But Jehovah is in his holy temple,
Let all the earth be silent before Him.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 15.—כֻּלֹּה points back to the collective אָדָם, ver. 14. Here it is the object: in ver. 8, it is the nominative. For the form, see Green's *Heb. Gram.*, sec. 220, 1 b. The correct orthography is כֻּלּוֹ.

[2 Ver. 1.—מִשְׁמֶרֶת, *observance, guard, watch*, from שָׁמַר, *to watch, observe, preserve, etc.* Here it is used as a concrete, the *place*, or *post of observation*.

[3 Ver. 1.—צָפָה signifies *to look out, to look out for anything, to await.*

[4 Ver. 1.—תּוֹכַחְתִּי, *my proof, contradiction, reproof, correction, complaint*, refers to the complaint, which he makes against God in chap. i. 13–17, that He permits the Chaldeans to multiply their conquests. The suffix is not to be taken passively, but actively,—not the complaint against me, but the complaint that I make against God. LXX.: *ἐπὶ τὸν ἔλεγχόν μου*; Vulgate: *et quid respondeam ad arguentem me*; Luther: *und was ich antworten soll dem, der mich schilt*; Kleinert: *was für Bescheid ich bringen soll auf meine Gegenrede.*

[5 Ver. 2.— חָזוֹן, *vision*, the prophetic matter about to be communicated to the prophet.

[6 Ver. 2. — וּבָאֵר, *and grave*. The LXX. read καὶ σαφῶς; the Vulgate has: *et explana eum*. Luther: *und male es*. The idea of legibility, and not that of durability, is doubtless intended. The verb בָּאֵר may, therefore, be understood as relative to כְּתֹב and qualifying it. *Write the vision, and that clearly.*

[7 Ver. 3.—לַמּוֹעֵד, *to the set time*, the time fixed by God for its realization.

[8 Ver. 6. — מָשָׁל, *parable, apothegm, proverb, poem, song, verse; a satirical poem*, Is. xiv. 4.

[9 Ver. 6. — מְלִיצָה from לוּץ, a song of derision.

[10 Ver. 6.— חִידוֹת, from חוּד, *intricate speech, a riddle, enigma*. The LXX. render them: πρόβλημα εἰς διήγησιν; the Vulgate reads, *loquelam ænigmatum*; Luther: *eine Sage und Sprüchwort*; Kleinert: *eine Stachelrede, Rathselspiele*. Delitzsch thinks that מְלִיצָה signifies a brilliant oration, *oratio splendida*; and hence מֵלִיץ is used to denote an interpreter, not from the obscurity of the speaking, but from his making the speech clear or intelligible. But there seem to be no instances in which לוּץ has the meaning of *lucere*.

[11 Ver. 6. — עַבְטִיט, from עָבַט, *to give a pledge*, by the repetition of the last radical, signifies the mass of pledges (*pignorum captorum copia*). The word עַבְטִיט may form two words, so far as the sound is concerned, namely עָב, טִיט cloud (*i. e.* mass) of dirt. Jerome and the Syriac take the word in this sense. The Vulgate reads: *et aggravat contra se densum lutum*; Luther: *und ladet nur viel Schlamm auf sich.*

[12 Ver. 7. — נֹשְׁכֶיךָ from נָשַׁךְ, *to bite, to lend on usury*. The idea seems to be, that those would arise, who would demand back from the Chaldæans, with interest, the capital of which they had unjustly taken possession. There is an antithesis to עַבְטִיט, at the close of the preceding verse.

[13 Ver. 15. — חֲמָתְךָ is the construct of חֵמָה *heat, wrath*, and not of חֵמֶת, *bottle*. Luther employs the second person: *Wehe dir, der du deinem Nächsten einschenkest und mischest deinen Grimm darunter*, etc. So also Kleinert: *Wehe dir, der da zu trinken giebt seinem Nächsten, indem du deinen Zornschlauch ausgiessest.*

[14 Ver. 16. — קִיקָלוֹן a ἅπ. λεγ., according to Keil, formed from the *Pilpal*, קִלְקֵל from קָלַל; but, according to Henderson, a reduplicated form of קָלוֹן, *shame*. In some MSS. it is read as two words, קִיא, *vomit*, and קָלוֹן, *shame*, and this etymology has been approved by both Jewish and Christian interpreters. The Vulgate reads: *et vomitus ignominiæ super gloriam tuam*; Luther: *und musst schändlich speien für deine Herrlichkeit*; Keil: *the vomiting of shame*; Kleinert: *Schandgespei über deine Herlichkeit.*

[15 Ver. 17. — וְשֹׁד בְּהֵמוֹת יְחִיתַן LXX.: Καὶ τ. θ. πτοήσει σε; Vulgate: *et vastitas animalium deterrebit eos*; Luther: *und die verstörten Thiere werden dich schrecken*; Kleinert: *und die Verstörung der Thiere, die er verscheucht*. Keil considers יְחִיתַן a relative clause, and translates the clause: "*and the devastation among the animals, which frightened them*. According to this view, the appended Nun is not paragogic, but the verbal suffix of the third feminine plural, agreeing with בְּהֵמוֹת. For the use of the suffix fem. 3 pl. see Green's *Heb. Gram.*, sec. 104, g.; and for the peculiar form of the verb, sec. 141, 3. Furst's *Heb. Lexicon*; *die Verwüstung durch Behemot*.

[16 Ver. 18. — אֱלִילִים אִלְּמִים; compare εἴδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα, 1 Cor. xii. 2. — C. E.]

EXEGETICAL.

The first glance shows that this [second] dialogue also is divided into distinct members. These are: —

(1) *The Question* of the prophet in the name of Israel. Is then the destroyer predicted (vers. 5–11), to have continual security? i. 12–ii. 1.

(2). *The Answer of God* by the prophet (ii. 2–20). Every one who is guilty and does not trust in the living God must be destroyed, consequently also the destroyer.

I. Chap. i. ver. 12–ii. 1. *The Question*. As if the prophet had fallen into terror by the distressing answer and the terrifying description, which the Spirit of God drew by him of the destroyer, and had in the mean time failed to hear of the glorious prospect, which was already opening up in ver. 11, he turns, praying and expostulating, to God: **Art thou not from eternity, Jehovah, my God, my Holy One?** in order to receive himself the consoling confidence from the experimental faith, which puts this address in his mouth: **we shall not die.** "Jehovah, my God" is the vocative, and "my Holy One" is the predicate. The suffixes of the first person refer not to the prophet as an individual, but to the people whom he represents; for according to the usage of Scripture language Jehovah is not the Kadôsch [Holy One] of the prophet, but the Kadôsch of Israel; hence in the verb the change to the plural. Jehovah is implored as the Holy One, *i. e.*, as He, who in a special manner, by special avowal of property [in them] and special revelation (Ex. xix. 4), adopted Israel from among all nations; and hence as He requires special purity from Israel, so also He will exercise special mercy toward him (Hos. xi. 9); and [He is implored] as He, who has life in Himself, so that whoever abides in Him, cannot be abandoned to death. (Hence לֹא נָמוּת). Compare the *Jahrb. f. deutsche Theologie* [Journal of German Theology], xii. (1867), 1, p. 42 f. As such, God had shown himself from times of old (comp. Is. lxiii. 16), and He is one Jehovah, one continuing always the same (Ex. iii. 14; Deut. xxxii. 40), hence also now He will not show himself otherwise. But at the same time there lies also in the designation *Kadôsch* the ethical reason that the Holy One of Israel cannot leave unpunished (Nah. ii. 3) him, who has done injury to his sanctuary Ps. cxiv. 2); and then the concluding thought is

introduced by virtue of ver. 11, which is afterward further carried out in ver. 13. Rather, if Jehovah permits the destroyer at all to exercise violence upon Israel, the ground of it is a plan of Divine Wisdom and of a holy government of the world: **Jehovah, for judgment hast thou appointed it, and thou Rock hast founded it for chastisement.** The noun צוּר signifies figuratively the same thing as Jehovah in reality; the unchangeable God, who among all the perverse ways of men remains always the same (Deut. xxxii. 37; Ps. xviii. 32, and above). The chastisement does not tend to the destruction, but to the salvation of those who are chastised (Ps. cxviii. 18). The vocatives Jehovah and Rock are continued by the vocative address ver. 13: **Thou art too pure in thine eyes to be able to look upon evil** (for the constr. comp. Judges vii. 2; Deut. xiv. 24) **and thou canst not look,** inactively, **upon mischief** (comp. on ver. 3); thou, who on account of ungodliness among us, bringest up the destroyer, **why wilt thou look upon the plunderer?** Thou wilt also not leave the sin unpunished, with which thou punishest sin. *Boged* is in prophecy a standing term for designating the violent Babylonian conqueror (Is. xxi. 2; xxiv. 16). The *why* is rhetorical: Thou canst certainly not do it. **Why art thou silent** — epexegetical to the apathetic looking on in *c*, for the purpose of designating it as an inactive, tranquil letting-alone (comp. Ps. l. 21); — **when the wicked** — who does not even know thee, but has always been at a distance from thee (comp. Micah ii. 4) — **devours him, who is more righteous than he?** Although there is much wickedness in Israel, yet, because the Holy One (ver. 12) dwells in the midst of them, they are still much more righteous (comp. the N. T. idea of the δίκαιοι and ἅγιοι), than he, who purposes to extirpate the worship of Jehovah along with his people; comp. Is. xxxvi. 15 ff. Grotius: "*Judæi magnis criminibus involuti erant, sed tamen in ea re multum a Chaldæis superabantur.*"

The לָמָּה is to be supplied in ver. 14 also from ver. 13: **and why makest** thou, wilt thou make **men like fishes of the sea.** [So Henderson; but Keil does not supply לָמָּה. — C. E.] These are not considered as elsewhere with reference to their great number, but to their defenselessness against the fisher's net, to which the Chaldæan is compared. Hence the parallel clause: **like the reptile** — here the creeping things of the sea (as in Ps. civ. 25) — **which has no ruler,** no one who appears to care for, protect and defend them, who goes before collecting means for defense. Where there is no ruler there are helplessness and destruction (Micah iv. 9). Instead of לוֹ, indicating possession, בּוֹ stands in the short relative clause, because מֹשֵׁל is construed with this preposition; literally, no one rules over them.

Ver. 15. **All of them** (comp. ver. 9) [suf. ה referring to the collective אָדָם, ver. 14 — C. E.] **he,** the fisher, **lifts up with his hook,** from the deep in which they thought themselves safe. [Because the short vowel seghol is lengthened in the first syllable of העלה into tsere, the corresponding hhateph-seghol must pass over into hhateph-pattach, which occurs after all vowels except seghol and kamets. Ges., sec. 63. Rem. 4.]. **And he draws** (גרר) **them into his net, and collects them in his fish-net. Therefore — to his net** (ver. 16). That is to say, he sacrifices to his martial power, by which he brings the nations under his sway, and which is forsooth his god (ver. 11). The Sarmatians were accustomed to offer annually a sacrifice to a sabre set up as an insignia of Mars (Her., iv. 59, 62; Clem. Al., *Protrept.* 64). Whether a similar custom existed among the Babylonians is not known; this passage is clear without the supposition of such a custom. **For by them,** net and fish-net, **his portion is rich,** his possessions and gain (Eccl. ii. 10), **and his food is fat.** It is the manner of men to render divine honor to that, by which they procure the means of living luxuriously; and idolatry is a perversion of the necessity of gratitude, which searches after the giver (Hos. ii. 10).

Ver. 17. **But, therefore, shall he empty his net,** *i. e.*, for the purpose of casting it out again for a new draught **and always strangle nations without sparing?** That, Thou, the only One, certainly canst not suffer, comp. ver. 13. In the last member the figurative language changes to literal; the infinitive with ל is not dependent upon חמל, but it stands instead of the finite verb. Compare on Micah v. 1, לֹא יַחְמֹל, "unsparingly," a frequent periphrase of the adverb by means of an adverbial clause (Is. xxx. 14; Job vi. 10).

Like Micah vii. 7 and Asaph, Ps. lxxiii. 28, the prophet (ii. 1) flees from the picture of destruction, which involuntarily unrolls itself again before his eye, to the solitary height of observation where he hopes to learn the ways and direction of God. **I will stand upon my watch-tower and station myself upon the fortress.** The language is not literal, like that of Deut. xxii. 3; but figurative (comp. Is. xxi. 8); since the prophet does not pretend, like the heathen Seer, to discover the Word of God from any celestial sign observed in solitude; but he receives it in the heart (Deut. xxx. 14; Num. xii. 6). [Keil: "Standing upon the watch, and stationing himself upon the fortification, are not to be understood as something external, as Hitzig supposes, implying that the prophet went up to a lofty and steep place, or to an actual tower, that he might be far from the noise and bustle of men, and there turn his eyes toward heaven, and direct his collected mind towards God, to look out for a revelation. For nothing is known of any such custom as this, since the cases mentioned in Ex. xxxiii. 21 and 1 Kings xix. 11, as extraordinary preparations for God to reveal Himself, are of a totally different kind from this; and the fact that Balaam the soothsayer went up to the top of a bare height to look out for a revelation from God (Num. xxiii. 3), furnishes no proof that the true prophets of Jehovah did the same, but is rather a heathenish feature, which shows that it was because Balaam did not rejoice in the possession of a firm prophetic word, that he looked out for revelations from God in significant phenomena of nature (see at Num. xxiii. 3, 4). The words of our verse are to be taken figuratively, or internally, like the appointment of the watchman in Is. xxi. 6. The figure is taken from the custom of ascending high places for the purpose of looking into the distance (2 Kings ix. 17; 2 Sam. xviii. 24), and simply expresses the spiritual preparation of the prophet's soul for hearing the Word of God, *i. e.*, the collect-

ing of his mind by quietly entering into himself, and meditating upon the word and testimonies of God." — C. E.] Hence he continues: **and I will await,** literally look out for, **what He will speak in me,** "*accurate observare, quæ nunc in spiritu mentis contingant,*" Burck. Compare Hos. i. 2. Oehler in Herzog, *R. E.*, xvii. 637. **And what answer I shall bring to my complaint.** השיב as in 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. In direct words the prophet occupies the position of a mediator founded on Micah vii. 1: he complains and answers himself; by virtue of his subjectivity, which connects him to the people, he represents them; and by virtue of the Spirit which comes upon him, and to which his Ego listens eagerly as something objective, he represents God. He calls his address, which has just been concluded, תוכחת, a rejoinder, properly a speech for the purpose of conviction, or vindication, in a law suit (Job xiii. 6); with reference to the fact, that, against the threatening, which was in the first answer of God, it took the character of an objection, a deprecatio, an appeal to the mercy, holiness, and justice of God.

The answer follows immediately in the *Reply of Jehovah*, ver. 2–20. It is introduced by a parenthesis, giving directions and information to the prophet, like the reply of Micah to the false predictions of the false prophets (iii. 1): **and Jehovah answered me and said.** After an *Introitus*, which has the purpose of indicating the importance and immutability of the decrees announced, and after a Divine *acknowledgment* that the destroyer is worthy of punishment, the reply runs into a five-fold woe, which announces judgment upon all ungodly, rapacious, idolatrous conduct, consequently a general judgment of the world, which involves also the destruction of the conqueror.

Vers. 2 b, 3. *Introitus.* **Write down the vision** (comp. on i. 1; Ob. 1). חזון is not merely that which is seen, but also that which is inwardly perceived: חזה relates to the eye of the soul. **And make it plain** (באר as in Deut. xxvii. 8) **on tables, that he may make haste, who reads it,** *i. e.*, write it so plainly that every one passing by may be able to read it quickly and easily; קרא to read, with ב as in Jer. xxxvi. 13. From the fact that the tables are designated by the article as known, Calvin has already, in the Introduction to his commentary on Isaiah, drawn the conclusion that tables were put up in the temple (Luther, Ewald: in the market-place), on which the prophets noted down a summary of their prophecies, in order to make them known to the whole people. In this way he thinks the possibility of preserving so many prophecies from being falsified may be understood: the tablets, on which they were written, were taken down and piled up. Indeed this latter supposition has nothing incredible; this method of preservation, as the most recent excavations prove, was well known in the ancient East. In an excavation at Kouyunjik (Introd. to Nahum, p. 9) the workmen came upon a chamber full of tablets of terra cotta, with inscriptions in perfect preservation, piled in heaps from the floor to the ceiling. (Compare *Zeitschrift der Deutsch-morgenländischen Gesellschaft* [the Journal of the German Oriental Society] v. p. 446; x. pp. 728, 731; and on the contents of the tablets Brandis, art. "Assyria," in Pauly's *Encyclopedia*, i. p. 1890). The tablet, of course, of which Isaiah speaks, viii. 1, is not a public one, but one disposable for the private use of the prophets (comp. v. 16), and on that account it might appear doubtful whether such tablets were constantly fixed up; but at all events it follows in this passage that it was incumbent upon the prophet to fix them up. The article then points to the fact that the prophet had already laid them up for writing down the vision; since indeed he was not surprised by it, but he had looked out for it (ver. 1). The reason that several tablets are mentioned here, and not one, as in Isaiah, is found in the rich and various contents of the five-fold woe But at all events the design of the command, as the connection with what follows shows, is two-fold: first, that the word may be made known to all (comp. Is. viii. 1); secondly, that it shall not be obliterated and changed, but fulfilled in strict accordance with the wording. (Comp. Job. xix. 24; Is. xxx. 8.)

The latter reason appears with special force in ver. 3: **for the vision is yet for the appointed time,** still waits for a time of fulfillment, lying perhaps in a far distant future, but nevertheless a fixed (this is indicated by the article) time (comp. Dan. x. 14); what this set time is, that which follows declares: **and it strives to [reach] the end:** the final time, withheld from human knowledge (Acts i. 7), which God has appointed for the fulfillment of his promises and threatenings (comp. on Micah iv. 1; Dan. viii. 19, 17). The verb יפח, it puffs, pants to the end, is chosen with special emphasis: "true prophecy is animated, as it were, by an impulse to fulfill itself." Hitzig. [The third imp. (Hiph.) יָפֵחַ is formed with tsere, like יָמֵר, Ez. xviii. 14]. **And it does not lie,** like those predictions of the false prophets, which fixed the time of prosperity as near at hand (Micah ii. 11). Therefore, **if it tarry, wait for it** (comp. viii. 17); **for it will come** (comp. בוא of the fulfillment of prophecy, 1 Sam. ix. 6), **and not fail** (אחר as in Judges v. 28: 2 Sam. xx. 5). The use of this passage, Heb. x. 37, where it seems to be combined with Is. xxvi. 20, is grounded on the translation of the LXX., who point the preceding inf. abs. בא as the part. בָּא, and understand by the ἐρχόμενος, who will certainly come, the Messiah, the judge of the world. There is no objection to this Messianic reference, so far as the meaning is concerned, since all prophecy has its goal in Christ; but, if we accept that punctuation, the reference cannot lie in the words, since in case the definite individual, Messiah, is referred to, we must at least read הַבָּא.

Ver. 4–6 a. The starting-point of the following announcement of the judgment is exhibited as an ethical one with special reference to the conqueror. **Behold puffed up, his soul is not upright in him,** consequently he must perish, which furnishes the antithesis to "live" in the second half of the verse. In harmony with i. 7–11, the insolent defiance, exhibited in his pride, putting itself in the place of God, is pointed out as the pith of the sin of the foreigner.

[עֻפְּלָה, 3 fem. Pual, denominative from the subst. עֹפֶל, mound, tumor, from which also a Hiphil, Num. xiv. 44, is formed.] The uprightness, 4 b, forms a contrast to it which consequently is

not here, as at other times, opposed to it like simplicity to cunning sophistry (Ecc. vii. 29), but like humble rectitude to lying ostentation.

All pride against God rests on self-deception; and the judgment has no other object with reference to this self-deception than to lay it open, whereby it is proved to be nothing, consequently its possessor falls to destruction. **But the just will live,** not by his pride, not at all by anything that is his own, but by *the constancy of* **his faith** resting upon God and his word. The use, which the Apostle Paul makes of these words (Rom. i. 17; comp. Gal. iii. 11), is authorized, since there as here the antithesis, by which the idea broad in itself is distinctly sketched, is the haughty boast of his own power entangled in sin. [On the contrary the application of the first half of the verse Heb. x. 38, is obscured by the use of the incorrect translation of the LXX., as it is not characterized as an argumentative citation by the free transposition of both halves of the verse, but as a free reproduction. Compare Bengel on the passage.] Isaiah vii. 9 is also parallel to this passage in sense. The idea of faith, which, in this passage and generally in the O. T. lies at the foundation of the words אמונה resp. האמין, is not yet the specific N. T. idea of the appropriation of the pardoning grace of God, which brings salvation, but the broader one, which we find in Heb. ii.: laying firm hold upon (האמין), and standing firmly upon (אמונה) the word and promise of God, the firm reliance of the soul upon the invisible, which cannot be depressed and misled by the antagonism of that which is seen: *constantia, fiducia.* [For the word ὑπόστασις, Heb. xi. 1 (Oetinger: substructure), is certainly not chosen without reference to the stem אמן. Compare the verb חכה, ver. 3. Hitzig is certainly right in claiming for the substantive אמונה the signification of faithful disposition = צדקה; in passages like Prov. xii. 17 and Ez. xviii. 22, comp. 1 Sam. xxvi. 23, it cannot be doubled. But this meaning, however, is to be explained from the etymon, and is not in itself the only authorized one; and one needs not go back to the Hiphil האמין (as H. seems to think), in order to discover as the primary meaning, of the word אמן, that of standing firm. As צדק is the adherence of God to his word and covenant and the adherence of man to the word and covenant of God, so אמונה (compare the prevailing usage of the Psalms, especially Ps. lxxxix. 25, comp. 29) is the standing fast on the part of God to his word (ver. 1, 12), and the standing fast on the part of man to the word of God: any other constancy than that of a mind established on the word of God the N. T. does not know, at least not as a virtue. Comp. below Luther on the passage.

The general point of view, ver. 4, from which it is plain, what he says of the Babylonians, is particularized and enlarged in ver. 5, whilst the crimes of the Babylonian are placed under the light of experience, as it is expressed in a proverb. **And moreover** (the combination אף כי stands here in its natural signification, indicated by both words themselves, not in the modified meaning, as in 1 Kings viii. 27; Gen. iii. 1), **wine is treacherous.** The Babylonians were notorious for their inclination to drink: compare Curtius, ver. 1: "*Babylonii maxime in vinum et quæ ebrietatem sequuntur effusi sunt;*" and in general concerning their luxury, the characteristic fragment of Nicolaus Damascenus (*Fragm. Hist. Græc.*, ed. C. Müller, vol. ii. Paris, 1848. Fragm. 8–10, p. 357 ff.). [Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. ii. pp. 504, 507. — C. E.]. The brief formula has the stamp of the proverb, and בגד is not used in the sense of violent plundering, as in i. 13, but in that of perfidious treachery, as in Lam. i. 2; Job vi. 15 (here also intrans.). In drunkenness men arrogate to themselves high things, and afterward have not strength for them. Comp. also Prov. xxiii. 31 f. The other proverb reads: **A boastful man, great-mouth, continues not.** יהיר, only here and Prov. xxi. 24, signifies, in the latter passage by virtue of the parallelism (זֵד) and according to the versions, *tumidus, arrogans.* The predicate is attracted by ו, in order to give emphasis to the subject, as in Gen. xxii. 24; Ew., sec. 344 b. (Hupfeld on Ps. i., 1 takes גבר יהיר as predicate to יָנֶה; this, however, is too artificial.

That which follows forms together with ver. 6 a subjoined relative sentence, whilst the relative introduced before [its antecedent] is defined by the עליו in the following verse; and the contents of this subjoined sentence is the direct application of vers. 4, 5 a to the Chaldæan: **He, who widens his desire like the insatiable** (Prov. xxvii. 20) **jaws of hell.** נֶפֶשׁ, as in Ps. xvii. 9; compare for the figure Is. v. 14. **Yea, he, who like death is not satisfied** (construction as in the first member), **but gathers together all peoples to himself** (comp. i. 15) **and collects together all nations to himself; will not all these** (comp. Nah. iii. 19) **take up a proverb concerning him, yea a satirical speech, a riddle upon him?** On נשא compare Commentary on Nah. i. 1. משל, usually a figurative discourse, then a brief epigram, a proverb (Prov. i. 1); here as in Is. xiv. 4, according to the connection, a scoffing, mocking song, in view of the certainty of the fate prepared for him. The same sense is given by the context to the word מליצה, to which it [the sense] seems more nearly related by the root ליץ, to mock, and the derivatives לֵץ and לָצוֹן. Yet this is in fact no more than semblance, as the passage, Prov. i. 6, proves, from which Habakkuk borrows the phraseology of this verse, and in which nothing of derision is to be found. We must rather go back to the Hiphil of the stem, which signifies *interpretari*: מליץ is an interpreter. (Delitzsch denies this signification of הֵלִיץ [Hiph. pret.], however without proof; his explanation, brilliant oration, is entirely imaginary.) Therefore מְלִיצָה is not an explanatory saying, *i. e.*, it is not an illustrative, luminous one (Keil), the contrary of which the passage Prov. i. 6, and likewise the character of the proverb following, prove, but it is a saying which needs interpretation (as our riddle does not guess, but is intended to be guessed), an apothegm (so the LXX. on Prov. i. 6: σκοτεινὸς λόγος: in

this passage they construe מליצה with what follows), accordingly it is synonymous with the following word חידות, *αἰνίγματα*, enigma—an extremely popular form of poetry in the East, and which is also among us a favorite form of popular political ridicule. Certainly to the mind of the prophet it is something different, a prophetic speech.

(Keil: "*Mâshâl* is a sententious poem, as in Mic. ii. 4 and Is. xiv. 4, not a derisive song, for this subordinate meaning could only be derived from the context, as in Is. xiv. 4 for example; and there is nothing to suggest it here. So, again *Melîtsâh* neither signifies a satirical song, nor an obscure enigmatical discourse, but, as Delitzsch has shown, from the first of the two primary meanings combined in the verb לוּץ, *lucere* and *lascivire*, a brilliant oration, *oratio splendida*, from which מֵלִיץ is used to denote interpreter, so called, not from the obscurity of the speaking, but from his making the speech clear or intelligible. חִידוֹת לוֹ is in apposition to מְלִיצָה and מָשָׁל, adding the more precise definition, that the sayings contain enigmas relating to him (the Chaldæan).")

Lucere does not seem to be one of the primary meanings of לוּץ. Fürst gives *umherspringen*,—hüpfen (aus Muthwillen), dah. *muthwillig, ausgelassen, unruhigen Geistes sein;* übertr. *verhöhnen*,—*spotten, achten unbeständig sein.* Gesenius: *balbutire*, (1) *barbare loqui;* (2) *illudere, irridere* alicui. *Thesaurus.* See "Special Introduction to the Proverbs of Solomon," sect. 11, note 2, in this Commentary.—C. E.]

Vers. 6 b–20. *The Fivefold Woe.* Two views are possible concerning the contents of this discourse. One may view it either wholly as the song of the nations indicated ver. 6 a, consequently as entirely and specially directed against Babylon; or that only the first woe constitutes this song, but in the others the prophet retains the form once begun, in order to connect with them general thoughts of the judgment. If in favor of this latter view no further argument can be urged than the one, that in the time of Habakkuk, Nebuchadnezzar had not yet committed all the sins, which are here laid to his charge, a consideration on which Hitzig certainly lays stress, one might perhaps be authorized in calling it, with Maurer and Keil, the most infelicitous of all. But not only the general contents of the following threatenings, which as much concern the sins of Judah, as those of the Chaldæans, are in favor of it; but also the circumstance that it appears worthy of God, after the impressive introduction, vers. 2, 3, and the profound conclusion ver. 4 to command the prediction not of a mere amplified derisory song of the nations, but of a universal threatening against sin, in which of course and before all the sin of the Chaldæans is also to be included. Further, in favor of this view is the fact that precisely the first woe, vers. 6–8, has both the form of the brief, aphoristic, enigmatical song and a direct reference to Babylon, while in the second and third both are entirely wanting; and further that the immediate transition from such a poetical form in the beginning to a more extended prophetical address frequently occurs in other places in the prophets (Mic. ii. 4 ff.; Is. xxiii. 16 ff.; xiv. 4 ff.). Also the plural of לחות ver. 2, points rather to a plurality of objects of the prophecy than to a single one; and so also the concluding formula ver. 20 (all the world), points to the universality of the predicted judgment. Finally, we had in chap. i. the same double reference of the prophecy; both to the intolerableness of the present sinful state of things (ver. 2 ff.), and to that of the future state of calamity; both are characterized by entirely parallel formulæ, comp. namely, vers. 3 and 13: the five woes correspond to both complaints.

Vers. 6–8. *First Woe.* It is immediately connected by the וְיֹאמַר to the ישאו in ver. 6 a, and thereby expressly pointed out as the song raised by the oppressed over the fall of the conqueror. "וי is used here, as in 2 Kings ix. 17; Is. lviii. 9; Ps. lviii. 12, in distinction from the aorist וַיֹּאמֶר, as an annexed jussive form in a future sense and impersonal (comp. Micah ii. 4); **they shall say: Woe** (comp. on Nah. iii. 1) **to him who accumulates what is not his own.** לֹאלוֹ as in i. 6. By this accord of sounds the solution of the enigma, which lies in this designation of the Babylonian, is undoubtedly and fully suggested. However, there is in the accord itself, as Delitzsch remarks, a new enigma, to wit, the ambiguity: he accumulates not for himself (Eccl. ii. 25). In the following expression: **For how long,** the exclamation, how long *already!* as Hitzig thinks, is not intended; but the exclamation, how long *still!* The entire contents of the verse show that he does not suppose the catastrophe as having already taken place, but he predicts it in the midst of the oppression. Generally the formula עד מתי is employed only in the sense of complaint concerning a present evil. **And who loads himself with a burden of pledges gained by usury** (comp. i. 11). עבטיט is also ambiguous: derived from the root עבט, it can signify either a mass of pledges (comp. כגר ר, *shower of rain*, כמריר, *thick darkness*): to wit, the laboriously acquired property of the nations, which he collects together, just as the unmerciful usurer heaps up pledges contrary to the law of Moses (Deut. xxiv. 10); and which he must for that reason deliver up; or it may be considered as a composite of עָב (*thickness*, comp. Hupf. on Ps. xviii. 12) and טיט, *thick mud.* Compare Nah. iii. 6.

Ver. 7. **Will not those who bite thee rise up suddenly** (a play upon words between נָשַׁךְ, *bite of a snake*, and נֶשֶׁךְ, *interest:* who recover usury from thee); **and those who shake thee violently** [allusion to the violent seizure of a debtor by his creditor—C. E.] **wake up** (from יָקַץ)? **And thou wilt become a booty to them,** משסות, plur. rhet. Comp. on Micah v. 1.

Ver. 8. **For thou hast plundered a multitude of nations** (comp. Micah iv. 2), **so all the remnant** (v. 2) **of the nations will plunder thee:** the remnant of the subdued, *i. e.* the not subdued, those lately come into existence, as *e. g.* the Persians (Is. xlv.). [Keil, after a labored exposition, concludes: "From all this we may see that there is no necessity to explain 'all the remnant of the nations,' as relating to the remainder of the nations that had not been subjugated, but that we may understand it as signifying the remnant of the nations plundered and subjugated by the Chaldæans (as is done

by the LXX., Theodoret, Delitzsch, and others), which is the only explanation in harmony with the usage of the language. For in Josh. xxiii. 12, *yether haggôyim* denotes the Canaanitish nations left after the war of extermination; and in Zech. xiv. 2, *yether hā'ām* signifies the remnant of the nation left after the previous conquest of the city, and the carrying away of half its inhabitants." — C. E.] **For the blood of men** (מִן as in Ob. 10) **and violence in the earth, the city, and all that dwell in it.** The same enumeration of everything destructible, as i. 11 ff. 14; hence not to be restricted to Jerusalem and Israel, though specially intended, but to be understood generally, like Jer. xlvi. 8 [Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. ii., p. 506. — C. E.]

Vers. 9–11. *Second Woe.* If the Chaldæan (vers. 6–8), according to the connection, was the only possible object, this threatening of judgment certainly reaches farther: **Woe to him, who accumulates wicked gain for his house, who sets his nest on high** (the inf. with ל continues the construction of the imperfect, as is frequently the case), [the infin. with ל is used to explain more precisely the idea expressed by the finite verb. Nordheimer's *Heb. Gram.*, sec 1026, 2. — C. E.] **to save himself from the hand of evil.** The judgment of God, proceeding from his holiness, has its source in a necessity universally moral, and, on this account, falls upon all sinners; and the description of those characterized here does not fit so well, according to the language of prophecy, the Chaldæans, who inhabited a low country,— the parallel (Is. xiv. 12 ff.) produced by Delitzsch, conveys the idea of heaven-defying pride, whilst here the prophet speaks of concealing treasures, — as it does the Edomites, who stored up their plunder in the clefts of the rocks (Ob. 3.; Jer. xlix. 7 f.). And it applies just as well to the rich in Jerusalem (comp. Is. xxii. 16 ff.), and especially to King Jehoiakim, whose conduct is described in language (Jer. xxii. 13 ff) uttered nearly at the same time with that of our prophet, and in exactly similar modes of expression. [Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. ii. p. 504.— C. E.]

Ver. 10 also applies to the same person: **Thou hast consulted shame,** instead of riches, **for thy house,** the house of David, which was called to a position of honor before God. And what is the **shame?** The ends of many nations, *i. e.*, **the collective multitude of peoples** (comp. 1 Kings, xii. 31) which shall come up like a storm to take vengeance upon the sins of Israel, just as the remnant of the nations are at a future time, to take vengeance upon the sins of the Babylonian. **And thou involvest thy soul in guilt** (Prov. xx. 2).

[" The ends of many nations," by which Kleinert renders קְצוֹת־עַמִּים רַבִּים, gives no intelligible meaning. קְצוֹת is not the plural of קָצֶה, but the infinitive of קָצָה, *to cut off, destroy.* The proper rendering, therefore, is *cutting off many nations.* — C. E.]

Ver. 11. **For the stone cries out of the wall,** built in sin, to accuse thee (Gen. iv. 10), **and the spar out of the wood-work answers it,** — agrees with it in its charge against thee: when the judgment draws near they are the accusing witnesses. Immediately joined to this is —

The Third Woe, vers. 12–13. **Woe to him who builds the fortress in blood, and founds the city in wickedness.** Since the prophet has not denounced punishment upon Nebuchadnezzar for building, but for destroying cities (i. 11 f), we must here also, especially on comparing Micah iii. 10 and Jer. xxii. 13, understand the reference to be to the buildings of Jehoiakim. **Behold, does it not come to pass** (2 Chron. xxv. 26) **from Jehovah of hosts,** that **the tribes weary themselves,** — either come up on compulsory service for the king, or driven to Jerusalem by the calamity of war to work upon the fortifications (2 Chron. xxxii. 4 f.; compare also Micah i. 2) — **for the fire, and the nations exhaust themselves for vanity?** All human wisdom and toil have no success, where Jehovah does not assist in building (Ps. cxxvii. 1); this applies to Israel (Is. lvii. 10; xlix. 4; comp. xl. 28, 30; lxv. 23), as it does to Babylon (Jer. li. 58). And this vanity must be made manifest: the works of men must crumble into the dust from which they arose (comp. Micah v. 10; vii. 13).

For (ver. 14) **the earth shall be full,** but **of the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the bed of the sea.** So God himself has promised by Isaiah (xi. 9; comp. ii. 3). This glory is the resplendent majesty of the Ruler of the world coming to judgment against all ungodliness, and for the accomplishment of salvation (Num. xiv. 21; Ps. xcvii.; Zech. ii. 12). This knowledge comprehends, at the same time, the acknowledgment of Jehovah and the confession of sin. מלא is not construed as usual with the acc. of the subst., but with ל and the infinitive. To analyze the last clause into a noun with a following relative clause is unnecessary: כ can also be used (which Ewald and Keil deny) as a particle of comparison before whole sentences (Hupfeld, *Psalms*, ii. p. 327 A. 99). ים does not mean here the sea itself, but the bed, or bottom of the sea, as in 1 Kings vii. 26. With the general thought which ver. 13 f. adds to the special turns [of thought] there is a return to the punishment of heathen wrong-doers. Upon them falls exclusively —

The Fourth Woe, vers. 15–18, which also directly introduces again some enigmatical sounds of the first. **Woe to thee** [so Kleinert and Luther: the LXX., Vulgate, A. V., Keil, and Henderson, use the third person, *woe to him* — C. E.] **that givest thy neighbor to drink — whilst thou pourest out** (מְסַפֵּחַ, as in Job xiv. 19; synonymous with שְׁפֹךְ, Jer. x. 25,) **thy wrath** [or thy leathern bottle, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Hitzig (Gen. xxi. 14); perhaps as the whole address directs us back to ver. 6 ff., there is again here also an intentional ambiguity] **and also makest him** (thy neighbor) **drunk** (inf. abs. pro v. fin., Ges., sec. 131, 4 a.) **in order to see their shame**; to make it wholly subservient to his voluptuous desire (Nah. iii. 5). [In place of the third person in the first member, the address changes, in the second member, to the second person; in the fourth member the singular is changed into the plural. Both the middle clauses are adverbial to the מַשְׁקֵה of the first member]. The figure is taken from common life, and is clear of itself; it is the more appropriate, as the Chaldæan is described (ver. 5) as a drunkard. The leathern bottle, from which the Chaldæan pours out his compacts (comp. Is. xxxix.), is, as it turns out in the end, a bottle of wrath; and the disposition in which it is passed is that of wild desire and barbarous lust of power. Therefore the same comes upon him.

Ver. 16. **So thou shalt be satisfied, as** thou desirest, but **with shame instead of glory. Drink thou also** (comp. Nah. iii. 11) **and uncover thyself** [Heb.: show thyself uncircumcised — C. E.]: **from Jehovah's right hand the cup,** also a cup of wrath (comp. Ob. 16) **will come in its turn to thee, and shameful vomit upon thy glory.** [Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. ii. p. 504. — C. E.] קִיקָלוֹן, according to the Pilpel derivation from קלל instead of קְלַקְלוֹן, signifies the most extreme contempt; but it can, at the same time, be considered as a composite word from קִיא קָלוֹן, vomit of shame, or shameful vomit (comp. Is. xxviii. 8) referring to the figurative description of the drinking revel.

Ver. 15. **For the outrage at Lebanon,** whose cedar forests the conquerors wickedly spoiled, in order to adorn with them their magnificent edifices in Babylon (Is. xiv. 7 ff.; comp. Ausland, 1866, p. 944), **shall cover thee,** shall weigh upon thee like a crushing roof, **and the dispersion of the animals, which it,** the outrage, **frightened away!** The wild beasts of Lebanon, which fled before the destroyer. (יְחִיתַן, instead of יְחִתַּן compensation for the sharpening by lengthening the vowel, Ges., 20, 3 c. Rem., and pausal change of the ֶ into ַ, Ges., sec. 29, 4, c. Rem.). [See Green's *Heb. Gram.*, sec. 112, 5 c.; 141, 3. — C. E.] And as Lebanon with its cedars (Jer. xxii. 6, 23), appears to be a representative of the Holy Land and its glory, so here also a general meaning is given to the outrage upon inanimate nature by the repetition of the refrain from the first woe, ver. 8: **On account of the blood of men, the outrage upon the land, the city and all its inhabitants.** However, the obvious reference to Israel and Jerusalem, in this passage, is made, by the connection, more distinctly prominent than in ver. 8, above.

Ver. 18, according to the thought, is preliminary to the following woe; just as we saw above that ver. 11 was preliminary to the third woe, and ver. 13 to the fourth. **What profiteth the graven image, that its maker carves it?** מה is used *sensu negativo*, as in Eccles. i. 3; and since it requires a negative answer, the secondary clause introduced into the rhetorical question by כי is also answered thereby in the negative: *quid, cur?* It profits nothing (Jer. ii. 11), consequently it is folly to carve it. Parallel to this is the following clause: what profiteth **the molten image and the teacher of lies,** *i. e.*, either the false prophet, who enjoins men to trust in idols, and encourages the manufacture of them (Is. ix. 14 [15?]), or rather, according to the יורה in the following verse, the idol itself, which points out false ways in opposition to God, the true teacher (Job xxxvi. 22; Ps. xv. 12; Delitzsch, Hitzig), **That the carver of his image trusts in him to make dumb idols?** (Ps. cxxxv. 16 f.; 1 Cor. xii. 2.) The negative answer to this rhetorical question is given by —

The Fifth Woe, which is immediately subjoined, vers. 19, 20: **Woe to him, who says to the block, wake up!** as the pious man can pray to the true God (Ps. xxxv. 12 [23]); **arise! to the dumb stone. Can it teach?** To teach is used here, as in the former verse and generally, to signify that active guidance and advice, which belong to the Deity in contradistinction to men, and which form the basis of practical piety. Concerning the form of the indignant question, compare [Com.] on Mic., ii. 6. **Behold it is enchased with gold and silver** (Acc.) **and there is nothing of soul,** neither breath, nor feeling, nor understanding, **in it.** (Com. Ps. cxxxv. 17). However fine it is, it does not even have life (comp. Jer. x. 14): how can it teach! Compare the amplification of the same thought, Is. xliv. 9 ff.

The whole threatening address concludes with the prophetical formula: **Jehovah is in the temple of his holiness,** *i. e.* according to Ps. xi. 4, compare xx. 7 [6], heaven, from which, as the situation now stands and as the woes about to pass over the earth are anticipated, we are to expect his judgment, *i. e.* the confirmation that He will give to show that He is the Holy One (comp. Ps. xviii. 7 ff.; Is. v. 16). Therefore, — compare the entirely similar connection of thought Zeph. i. 7; Zech. ii, 13 [*Heb. Bib.* ver. 17]: — **Let all the world be silent before Him.**

[Keil: Vers. 18–20. Fifth and last strophe. This concluding strophe does not commence, like the preceding ones, with *hôi*, but with the thought which prepares the way for the *woe*, and is attached to what goes before to strengthen the threat, all hope of help being cut off from the Chaldæan. Like all the rest of the heathen, the Chaldæan also trusted in the power of his gods. This confidence the prophet overthrows in ver. 18: "What use is it?" equivalent to "The idol is of no use" (cf. Jer. ii. 11; Is. xliv. 9, 10). The force of this question still continues in *massêkhah:* "Of what use is the molten image?" *Pesel* is an image carved out of wood or stone; *massêkâh* an image cast in metal. — C. E.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The sphere of thought of this chapter rests upon the two intersecting ground-lines, sin and death, faith and life. (Compare on the idea of faith the Exegetical Exposition of ii. 4.)

Sin and death belong together; sin is the ethical, death the physical expression of separation from God. Therefore the people of God cannot die, because He is their Holy One; because by virtue of their belonging to the Holy One they drink from the fountain of life. Therefore to Israel God's judgments are a means of purification, while they are destruction to others. And if God, who is a Rock, has such a hatred against sin, that he does not suffer it in his people [*heiligen Eigenthum*, sacred property] chosen of old (comp. Com. on Micah, p. 00), and brings upon it the scourge of his judgment, how much less will He suffer it in him who is a stranger to his heart, and whom He employs only as an instrument of his judgment. From the consideration that God judges Israel follows the certainty that He will judge the heathen also, consequently the certainty that Israel will be saved.

The sin of the world-power is two-fold; first, it deals with the property of God as if it were its own; secondly, it does not honor God for the success granted to it, but its own power. This must cease.

The countenance of faith is directed forward into the future. Thence it derives its answer for consolation and hope. (Of course it would not have this direction if it had not the promise of God behind it (Gen. xlix. 18); God is, however, always the author: He is of old the Holy One of his people.). When Israel forgat the promise, they began to look back to the flesh pots of Egypt. The whole religion of the O. T. is a religion of the future. Heathendom exercised its intellectual en

ergy upon the origins of things for the purpose of forming and developing their theogonies: the Holy Spirit directs the mind of Israel to prophecy: no ancient people has so little about the primitive time as we find in the O. T.; even modern heathendom knows [professes to know] much more about it. The exact time is not specified in prophecy, at least in regard to the intermediate steps (i. 5); but the certainty is specified, and the exact time is fixed in the purpose of God. God can no more lie than He can look upon iniquity. The certainty of prophecy, and consequently of our confidence, rests upon the holiness of God. How different is the resignation of the O. T. from fatalism. The former comes from life, the latter from death. Resignation places the holiness of God in the centre: fatalism destroys it.

God's way is the right way. He hates all crooked lines, — the side-lines of sophistry, the curve-lines of boasting, the downward sunk lines of dark concealment. Sin is deviation from the straight way. The straight way is the way of life.

The piety of the Old Testament begins with faith (Gen. xv. 4 [6]). The stage of the law enters, which gives the uppermost place to faith in action, the obedience of faith, and which, with the apparent extension of the principle of faith, involves in fact a narrowing of it. In prophecy the original principle, in its universality, enters again gradually into its right position. The book of Job may be mentioned as a proof of this. The obedience of the law has for its correlative the doctrine of retribution. On this Job is put to shame. Against it he has no sufficient answer. But because his heart, in every trial, maintained its faith in God, he is nevertheless justified. The book of Job is the exposition of Hab. ii. 4. Faith is the direct way to the heart of God. He who interposes himself (his own works, his own merits, his own law, his own thoughts) perverts the way. Apostasy from faith is the beginning of sin. In the heart of God is imperishable life, because there is imperishable holiness. Therefore the faith of Israel is the correlative of the Holy One of Israel; and *faith is the way to life, as sin is the way to death.*

The characteristic mark of the kingdom of God is free-will. The world-power raffs men together; they are invited into the kingdom of God; they rise and say: Come, let us go. The *coge intrare* is contrary to the Scripture. (The *prohibe* of the enemies of missions is just as truly so. Is. xlix. 6.) He who thus gathers [men] together, brings upon himself scorn at last. All nations, which Rome has converted by force, have fallen away from her, and they sing over her a song of derision.

Property is sanctified by God; but over-grasping gain is cursed by Him. His omniscience is present in his judgment. Hidden crime is laid open and punished, as if blood, spar, and stones had speech to inform against what is concealed behind them, the guilt that is built up in them. We see in the manner in which no concealed wickedness remains unpunished, but is banished out of sight, the hand of God and the manifestation of his glory on every side, without seeing himself. The pillar of smoke and of fire over the burned city of sin is the veil of his glory. The design of the creation, according to the O. T., is the glory of God. For this the earth was made, just as the basin of the sea was made for the water.

The sinner does not find the right way: he is like a drunken man. To the upright man the ways of sinners are a reeling [an intoxication]. He who leads astray makes drunk; but he enters of himself upon the most crooked way, and hence comes to destruction. The intoxication of sin culminates in the insanity of idolatry. The idol is lifeless. Its worshipper seeks by idolatry, as the righteous man does by faith, the way of life; but he comes to the silence of death. The tranquillity of life is quite another thing. (Is. xxx. 15.)

OETINGER: Rectitude of heart is the substance and ground of truth. He who has a right heart, sees rightly and hears rightly; he who has a perverse heart heaps up falsehood, without knowing it. Nature produces all the elements at once: the upright soul attracts to it what is true and honest. Intensiveness precedes extensiveness: the moral precedes the physical; the physical, the metaphysical.

R. JOSEPH ALBO (in Starke and Delitzsch): in the book of Chronicles it is said: believe in the prophets, and ye shall be prosperous (2 Chron. xx. 20). This proves that faith is the cause of prosperity, as well as the cause of eternal life, according to the saying of Habakkuk: the just shall live by his faith; by which he cannot mean the bodily life, since in respect to this the righteous man has no advantage over the wicked, but rather the eternal life, the life of the soul, which the righteous enjoy, and for the attainment of which they trust in God, as it is said: The righteous has still confidence in death [A. V.: The righteous hath hope in his death]. (Prov. xiv. 32.)

W. HOFFMANN: Abraham had a view [*ausschau*, outlook] through the promise, in which, at last, every streak of shadow vanished, and in the distant horizon all was light and glory. He looked beyond this world to the blessed rest of the people of God; and he could not do otherwise than this, since he acknowledged God as the restorer of the life of men, of his own life, and of the life of all his descendants and tribes, — a life perverted to sin, fallen, and burdened with the curse. It is very likely that the thoughts of the father of the faithful were dark and obscure in regard to this, for it required yet great advancement before clear language could be employed concerning this holy change; but the heart's experience, which he enjoyed of it, was full and steadfast. Restoration of the lost, removal of sin, deliverance from spiritual death — that is the key-note of Abraham's faith. And it was deliverance only by the manifestation of God. It was this manifestation to which all the revelations of God at that time related. God's nearness, His dwelling with the children of men; this was the goal; hope could fasten upon no other. What else, therefore, was his faith than — although not consciously clear and grasped by the understanding — a laying hold upon the future Saviour with outstretched arms?

DELITZSCH: Troublous times are at hand. What then is more consoling than the fact, that life, deliverance from destruction, is awarded to that faith, which truly rests on God, keeps fast hold of the word of promise, and in the midst of tribulation confidently waits for its fulfillment? Not the veracity, the trustworthiness, the honesty of the righteous man, considered in themselves as virtues, are, in such calamities, in danger of being shaken and of failing, but, as is shown in the prophet himself, his faith. Therefore, the great promise, expressed in the one word, Life, is connected with it.

SCHMIEDER: All Bible prophecy looks forward to a distant time determined by God, but which we do not know. It points to the end, when the Lord by judgment and redemption shall establish

his perfect kingdom. This prophecy will not lie, but will certainly be fulfilled, though its fulfillment is always longer and longer deferred.

HOMILETICAL.

Chap. i. ver. 12. *Of the great joy, which we have reason to ground upon the fact, that God is the Holy One of his people.*

1. It is a joy of gratitude that He has always been with his own. Ver. 12 a, b.

2. A joy of continual confidence, that we cannot perish. Ver. 12 c.

3. A joy in chastisement, that it is only for the confirmation of his holiness, and for our purification. Ver. 12 d, e.

Chap. i. vers. 13-17: *There is a limit set to the power of the wicked upon earth.* For—

1. God is holy. Ver. 13 a, b.

2. But the work of the wicked is unholy. For—

(a) It is a work of hatred against the righteous. Ver. 13 c, d.

(b) It is an abuse of the powers bestowed by God. Ver. 14.

(c) It does nothing for God, but everything for itself. Ver. 15.

(d) It does not give God honor, but it makes itself an idol. Ver. 16.

3. Therefore it must have an end. Ver. 17.

Chap. ii. vers. 1-4. *The way of patience* (compare H. Müller, *Erquickstunden*, Nr. 97).

1. I *must* suffer, for God's judgments and purifications are necessary. Ver. 1 in connection with chap. i.

2. I *can* suffer; for God's Word sustains me. Vers. 2, 3.

3. I *will* suffer, for I believe. Ver. 4.

Or: Persevere, for the redemption draws nigh. (Advent-sermon).

1. The manner of perseverance: confidence. Ver. 1.

2. The ground of perseverance: the promise. Vers. 2, 3.

3. The power [*Kraft*, active power, or cause] of perseverance: faith. Ver. 4.

Chap. i. 12-ii. 4. *Israel's life of promise.*

1. A believing retrospect into the past.

2. A believing look into the future.

Chap. ii. vers. 5-20. *Of shameful and hurtful avarice.*

1. Avarice is contrary to the order prescribed by God; therefore God must bring it back to order by chastisement. Vers. 1, 6 b, 7.

2. It is contrary to love, therefore, it produces a harvest of hatred. Ver. 6 a.

3. It confounds the ideas of right, therefore wrong must befall it. Ver. 8 a.

4. It makes the mind timid; but where fear is there is no stability. Ver. 9.

5. It accumulates [riches] with sin, therefore for nothing. Vers. 12, 11, 13, 17.

6. It seeks false honor, therefore it acquires shame. Vers. 15, 16.

7. It sets its heart upon gold and silver and lifeless things, therefore it must perish with its lifeless gods. Vers. 18, 19.

8. On the whole, it provokes the judgment of God. Vers. 8 b, 14, 20.

On chap. i. 12. Jehovah, the God of Shem, the God of Abraham, of Israel and of Jacob, is not a God of the dead, but of the living. He is a rock: he who stands upon Him stands firm; he who falls upon Him is crushed. Everything that God does takes place for the instruction of him, who consecrates himself to Him. The best way through the afflictive dispensations of God, is not to ask: How shall I adjust them to my mind? But how shall I make them productive of my improvement?—Ver. 13. There is an inability, which is no want of freedom, but which is the highest freedom; and there is an ability, which is not freedom, but the deepest bondage. Matt. iv. 9. There is not one absolutely righteous man, but there are relatively more righteous men; the judgment of God has respect to this fact.—Ver. 14 f. Man was made lord over the beasts. God indeed permits men to be treated sometimes like beasts, but he who does it commits sin by it; and his insolence will be changed to lamentation.—Ver. 16. The sinner perverts and vitiates the holiest thing in man, the necessity of worship. Everything is a snare to him, who forsakes God.—Ver. 17. Everything continues its time. Eccles. 3.

Chap. ii. 1. Although we have the Holy Spirit as a permanent possession of the Church, and are no longer referred, like the prophets, to separate acts of enlightenment, nevertheless the answers of the Holy Spirit do not come to us without prayer, and patience and quiet waiting.—Ver. 2. Everything that is necessary to know in order to salvation, is so plainly written in the Scriptures, that even one who only looks at it hastily, in passing, cannot say that he may not have understood it.—Ver. 3. It is a great consolation to know that there is One who cannot lie. Ps. cxvi. 11. God's time is the very best time. We should not measure God's ways by our thoughts, nor the periods of eternity by our hours; but we should measure our ways by God's Word.—Ver. 4. Take heed that thou think not of thyself more than it is proper for thee to think. In humility there is power. Matt. xv. 28. Where there is no faith there is no righteousness. The prophet considers faith to be a self-evident possession of the righteous man. Life is the richest idea in the Scriptures. It is a great consolation to be able to say to the enemy, rage on; thou canst not do more to me than God has bidden thee, nor more than what is useful to me; and thy time is already measured.—Ver. 5. The intemperate are generally also vain-glorious. Both lead to destruction. Only a clear and sober eye finds the right way. There are many things which intoxicate. One can be intoxicated with honor, and another with hatred against honor. One can be intoxicated with science, and another with hatred against science. All partisan disposition is an intoxicating wine. Desire is insatiable: therein lies its destruction: it devours that, which produces its death.—Ver. 6. It is a miserable feeling for fallen greatness to be derided by those hitherto despised. He who gathers what is not his own does not gather it for himself. This also cannot continue long. Dignities are burdens [*Würden sind Bürden*, Prov. = the more worship, the more cost—C. E.] dignities fraudulently obtained are burdens.—Ver. 7. It is by [divine] ordination, when he, whom God intends to judge, nurses in his own bosom the serpent, which is to sting him. So it was with Nineveh. Thereby too [*i. e.*, by the same appointment: *darin* refers to *Verhängniss*: see Acts ii. 23—C. E.] Christ took upon himself the heaviest judgment of sin.—Ver. 8. The whole world becomes silent only before God. For all others there is a remnant of those, who have not been subdued, by whom they come to ruin. For those, who are not able to stay their hearts by faith in God, the doctrine of retribution taught in the law remains in

full power. They have no desire to choose the grace, therefore wrath abides upon them. God takes care of each individual, and will require each and every abused and ruined soul from the destroyer. — Ver. 9. Flee as high as you may, God is always still higher. What profit is there in all the prudence and in all the gain of the world, if the soul is a loser by them? — Ver. 11. God has his witnesses everywhere. "If these are silent, the stones will cry out." The blood of Abel cries from the earth, and the thorns and thistles in the field speak of Gen. iii. — Ver. 12. There is a building which destroys; and a destroying which builds. — Ver. 13. The blessing, or the curse, upon any work, comes after all, finally, only from above. Nothing can hinder the purposes of God concerning the world. — Ver. 15 f. The career of a great conqueror has something intoxicating. Before Napoleon not only degraded men became idolaters. There is a witchcraft in it. (Comp. i. 12 with the Introduction to the book of Job.) This comes finally to light, when God judges it, and bitter sobering follows the intoxication: men then have a horror of the human greatness before which they bowed. — Ver. 18. There is also in idolatry a kind of intoxication. The sober questions: What profiteth the image? How can it govern? guide? teach? do not occur to the minds of the worshippers of idols. A god that cannot speak is nothing. Without the Word of God there is no religion. Him, who is not silent before Jehovah from submission and faith, God's judgments must make silent.

Luther: Chap. i. ver. 12. The prophet calls God the Holy One of Israel, because they were holy through their God and by nothing else. And truly from all eternity God is a Holy One. For it gives great courage, when we know and firmly believe that we have a God; that He is our God, our Holy One, and that He is on our side. — Ver. 13. With these words Habakkuk shows what thoughts occur to wrestling faith, which holds that God is just; but He delays so long, and looks on the wicked, that one might almost think that He may not be just, but may have pleasure in evil men. It is a source of excessive grief that the unrighteous should be successful so long and acquire such great prosperity, though with calamity. But their success is permitted, in order that our faith, having been well tried, may become strong and abundant in God. And yet this is not grievous beyond measure, when a prophet stands by himself in such a conflict of faith; but when he stands in his official capacity and is to console and preserve an entire nation with him, then it is trouble, misery, and distress. Then the people kick, and there are scarcely two or three in the whole mass, who believe and struggle with him. — Chap. ii. ver. 1. Such words as the following will become the common cry: Pray, where are now the prophets, who promised us salvation? What fine fools they have made of us. Believe, whoever will, that it will come to pass. Thus does reason behave, when God fulfills his Word in another way than it has imagined. It is also the case then that one will not believe God at any time. Does He threaten? Then the present prosperity hinders us [from believing]. Does He promise grace? Then the present calamity hinders us. Then the prophets first of all endeavor to labor with the unbelieving, faint-hearted people. Therefore I stand, says the prophet, as one upon a tower, and contend strongly and firmly for the weak in faith against the unbelieving. — Ver. 4. Some take up the Jewish objection, pretend to be wise, and pass judgment upon Paul, as if he had dragged in Habakkuk unfairly and forcibly by the hair, since Habakkuk speaks of his table, and not of the Gospel. Though this table also speaks of the Gospel, yet it speaks of it as future, while Paul speaks of the present Gospel. It is, however, the same Gospel, which was then future and which has come, just as Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever (Heb. xiii. 8), although He is announced in a different way before and after his coming. But that is a matter of no importance; it is nevertheless the same faith and spirit. The truth, which one has in his heart, is called *Emunah* [firmness, stability, faithfulness, fidelity], and by that he clings to the truth and fidelity of another. Now I let it pass, whoever may be disposed to quarrel about it, that he who has the feeling in his heart which cleaves to another as faithful and true, and depends upon him, may call it truth, or what he will; but Paul and we do not know any other name for such a disposition than faith. — Ver. 11. Not only his edifice, but also the wide world, becomes too narrow for him who has a timid, desponding heart, and when a pillar or a beam cracks in his house he is terrified. Therefore princes and nobles, if they would build durably, should see to it that they lay a right good foundation, that is, they should first pray to God for heart and courage, which in the time of trouble may be able to preserve the building. But if no care is bestowed to acquire this courage [*den Muth*, by which Luther means faith, or the courage inspired by it — C. E.], but only wood and stone are reared up, it [the building] must finally, when the time comes, perish, as is here recorded.

Starke: Chap i. ver. 12. One can certainly pray to God for a mitigation, but not for an entire averting of all punishment.—Vers. 17. *Plus ultra*, always onward, is the maxim of heroes; how much more should it be the maxim of Christians, in regard to their constant growth and increase in spiritual life. — Chap. ii. ver. 1. Although all Christians, by virtue of the covenant of baptism, have been appointed watchmen by God (Ps. xviii. 32 ff.; cxxxix. 21), yet teachers particularly are called watchmen. — Ver. 2. The prophets had not only a commission to preach, but also to write. They act very wickedly who prevent plain people from reading the Holy Scriptures. God's Word must be plainly presented, so that even the most simple may learn to understand it. — Ver. 3. Waiting comprises in it (1) faith; (2) hope; (3) patience, or waiting to the end for the time which the Lord has appointed, but which He intends us to wait for. — Ver. 5. Pride, avarice, bloodthirstiness, and debauchery God does not leave unpunished in any one. — Ver. 8. We see here that not everything which is done in accordance with international law is right before God also, and allowed by Him. — Ver. 9. Prosperity inspires courage; courage pride; and pride never does one any good. — Ver. 10. Bad counsel affects him most who gives it. When tyrants are to execute the command and sentence of God, they generally observe no moderation in doing it. — Ver. 15. One should never invite any one as a guest, against whom he cherishes a malignant heart. — Ver. 16. Those who rejoice in distressing others, will in their turn be brought to distress by God and made objects of derision.

Pfaff: Chap. i. ver. 12. In times of public danger the safest and the best [means] is to have recourse to prayer. By it one can best vanquish the enemy and arrest his career. — Chap. ii. ver. 1. The ministers of the Gospel are spiritual watchmen, partly in relation to the souls of men, over which they

are to watch, and partly in relation to the Lord, to whose Word they are to give heed and which they are to preach. — Ver. 3. Ye despisers of the Word of God, do not imagine that the Word of the Lord against you will not be fulfilled. — Ver. 7 ff. To God belongs the right of retaliation. With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. — Ver. 20. If the divine judgments fall also upon us, we must adore with the deepest humility of heart, and lay our finger upon our mouth.

Rieger: Chap. ii. ver. 1. Even those who are in true communion with God are not always in the same state of mind. They are at one time, although in a godly frame [of mind], occupied with external things; at another time they are entirely abstracted from earthly things, and placed in a condition which approaches to waiting before the throne of God. This is sometimes effected by the grace of God through the medium of an unexpected impulse; but there are also sometimes on the part of the believer a preparation and composing of the mind for it. This state of mind is indicated in the New Testament by the expression, I was in the Spirit; and the prophet calls it his tower. — Ver. 3 f. What, according to our reckoning, seems to be delayed, will be admitted not to have been delayed; but to have taken place at the appointed day and at its proper time. The promises cannot be forced [into fulfillment] by a headstrong disposition; but on the contrary one falls sooner from such busy activity back again to a state of indifference, and thereby neglects the promise.—Ver. 5 ff. Upon what must a man, who has in his heart no peace arising from faith, lean for the purpose of finding peace therein? And how is it with him who misses the path that leads to God? There is nothing else adequate to fill the abyss of his soul, even though he were able to swallow the whole world. What filth upon his soul has he in his conquests, in his forced acquisitions and possessions! — Ver. 20. The prophet had obtained this whole disclosure by quiet and persevering waiting upon the Lord, and now for the sake of its realization, also, he directs the whole world to be still before the Lord, who from his holy temple will certainly hasten the fulfillment of these his words, but who also will be honored by the respect and by the measure of the regard of his own people to his judgments. When the heart is free from its thousand cares, projects, passions, partial inclinations, then, and not till then, can it receive many a ray of divine knowledge. Faith is no sleep, but a vigilant knowledge; it is moreover no hasty and precipitate attempt to help one's self, but a waiting upon the Lord.

Schmieder: Chap. i. ver. 13. It would be in conformity to the simple arrangement of God that the pious should punish the impious, the more righteous the unrighteous, not the reverse. But the ways of God in the present government of the world are so complicated and intricate, that the reverse often actually takes place; and this is to the pious, who are not yet properly enlightened, a great trial. — Ver. 14. Then it seems as if things were directed by chance and at will. He who knows God does not trust to false appearances; but the appearance nevertheless pains him, and he would wish that even the appearance did not exist.— Chap. ii. ver. 2 f. The end, the very last time and the establishment of the perfected kingdom of God, is of all future things the most certain and the most important, and every intermediate prophecy of judgment and redemption has a real value only in the fact that it delineates this last end and assures us of it. — Ver. 4. Here the character of Abraham, the father of the faithful, is depicted in contrast with that of the insolent princes of the world. This character is righteousness, the source of righteousness is faith, the fruit is life in the full Biblical sense of the word. Faith has no merit on the part of man, because man cannot produce, but only receive it; for faith, as the consciousness of God, is the work of the Creator in man. It is also faith alone, which receives Christ and all the grace of God in him; but the same faith is also the essential principle of all good works. We must beware of considering the faith, which lays hold of grace and justifies the sinner, as a peculiar, separate kind of faith: faith cannot be so divided in reality; but it is an indivisible unity: so the Bible understands it. The dividing and isolation of faith into separate kinds, belongs only to the dogmatic systems of human science. — Ver. 5. Comp. Dan. v. — Ver. 6. There are times, when nations, that are so often devoid of understanding, become prophets, and the voice of God becomes the voice of the people. — Ver. 18. The teacher, who makes an idol, tries to animate stone and wood. But the animation by means of human idea and art ever remains only a false animation, which, if it is considered real, is deceptive, and only nourishes superstition.

W. Hoffman: On chap. i. ver. 12 (comp. Schmieder on chap. ii. ver. 1): Among us of the evangelical church faith is not even yet the possession of every one. There is certainly need, in the Church, of the venerable form of father Abraham to cast us down; of the man who never lost sight of what had been revealed in grace and truth, who continually comforted himself with the fact, that the eternal God, who made heaven and earth, and who held with the first man a fellowship of peace, still lived, because he had continued to reveal himself during two thousand years previous.

Burck: It is something to know the final purposes of the words of God, and to be able properly to apply this knowledge in public and private affairs.

Hierom.: Ver. 13. He says this in the anguish of his heart, as if he did not know that gold is purified in the fire, and that the three men came out of the fiery furnace purer than they were when they were thrown in; as if he did not know that God, in the riches of his wisdom, sees otherwise than we do.

Burck: Ver. 14. That God watches over the smallest animals, he neither denies nor declares; but he says only that God has a particular care for men, especially for his own people.

Hengstenb. makes an effective application of ver. 13 ff. to gambling hells (*Vorw. z. Ev. K. Z.* [Preface to the *Evangelical Church Gazette*] 1867).

Capito: Chap. ii. ver. 1: While the righteous man wrestles with God by faith, he conquers at last by his indefatigable perseverance. The prophet is perplexed to the highest degree, while he considers the success of the Chaldæan and the misery of his own people, but he stands not the less constantly upon his guard, *i. e.*, upon the Word of God, which promises reward and punishment, and he leans upon God, as upon a rock, in order that his feet may not slip upon the slippery soil of temptation. Whom does God answer? One who is almost broken under daily struggles with bitter anguish of soul, to whom nothing remains, after every protection is lost, but to stand fast upon his watch, *i. e.*, upon the Word of God. Trial teaches such perseverance. Only the answer of God, if it is heard with the ear

of the heart, leads to an unwavering hope, for it comes when man despairs of everything else.

Ver. 3. PHILO: Every word of God is an oath.

BURCK: O those deplorable ones, who, under whatever pretext, or self-delusion, shun trial. O the happiness of those who obtain the end of faith, and who are to be gathered to Him to be with Him. He will come, yea, certainly He will come. Yea, come, Lord Jesus! Amen!

Ver. 4. COCCEIUS: The soul stands right upon that which is promised, *i. e.*, Jesus Christ, if it loves Him. If it does not love Him, it is perverse.

BURCK: On every point, article, accent, on every turn and even collocation of words, which may seem to be entirely accidental, the Word of God has laid its especial emphasis. We acknowledge with humility that it is a word from God.

TALMUD: In this one sentence, The just shall live by his *emunah* [faith], the six hundred and thirteen precepts, which God once delivered from Sinai, are collected into a compendium.

Ver. 5. SCHLIER: The Babylonians were a voluptuous people, notorious for their drunkenness; but this voluptuous propensity is usually with the prophet an image of the insatiable desire, by which in their pride they destroyed one nation after another. And yet it is just so with wine, which is sweet to the taste and seems delicious, and nevertheless it robs the most powerful of his senses, makes him helpless and an object of universal derision. So shall it happen also to the Chaldæans with their insatiable greed: it will only plunge them [by their own agency] into destruction and make them objects of general contempt.

H. MÜLLER: Many treasures, many nets. Whom does not the miser injure? He defrauds his neighbor of his property: he is like a thorn-bush; he grabs and holds on to whatever comes too near to him; he seeks everywhere his advantage to the disadvantage of others; he deprives himself of God's favor and blessing, suffers shipwreck of his conscience and good name, loses the favor and love of men. Lightly won, lightly gone.

STUMPF: Ver. 11. So in Euripides, Phædra, the wife of Theseus, breaks out vehemently against adulteresses, that they should fear the very darkness and the houses lest they might even raise their voice and bring the abominable deeds which they had witnessed to light.[1]

SCHLIER: The scourge of the Lord will perform its service, then it will be thrown away.

1 [See the *Hippolytus of Euripides*, line 415 f. — C. E.]

THE THEOPHANY.

CHAPTER III.

[*Title and Introduction* (vers. 1, 2). *The Prophet represents Jehovah as appearing in glorious Majesty on Sinai* (vers. 3, 4). *He describes the Ravages of the Plague in the Desert* (ver. 5). *The Consternation of the Nations* (vers. 6–10). *Reference to the Miracle at Gibeon* (ver. 11). *Results of the Interposition of God on Behalf of his People* (vers. 12–15). *Subject of the Introduction resumed* (ver. 16). *The Prophet asserts his Confidence in God in the midst of anticipated Calamity.* Parallels to this Ode: Deut. xxxiii. 2–5; Judges v. 4, 5; Ps. lxviii. 7, 8; lxxvii. 13–20; cxiv.; Is. lxiii. 11–14. — C. E.]

1 A prayer of Habakkuk, the prophet: with triumphal music.[1]

2 O Jehovah! I have heard the report of thee, I am afraid;
O Jehovah! revive thy work in the midst of the years;
In the midst of the years make it known:
In wrath remember mercy.

3 God[2] comes from Teman,[3]
And the Holy One from mount Paran.[4] Selah.
His splendor covers the heavens,
And the earth is full of his glory.

4 And the brightness is like the sun;
Rays[5] stream from his hand;
And there is the hiding[6] of his power.

5 Before him goes the plague;
And burning pestilence follows his feet.

6 He stands and measures[7] the earth:
He looks, and makes nations tremble:
The everlasting mountains are broken in pieces

The eternal hills sink down:
His ways[8] are everlasting.

7 I saw the tents of Cushan[9] in trouble:
The tent-curtains of the land of Midian tremble.

8 Was it against the rivers it burned, O Jehovah?
Was thine anger against the rivers?
Was thy fury against the sea?
That thou didst ride upon thy horses,
In thy chariots of victory.

9 Thy bow is made entirely bare:
Rods[10] [of chastisement] are sworn by the word. Selah.
Thou cleavest the earth into rivers.

10 The mountains saw thee, they writhe;
A flood of water passes over:
The abyss utters its voice;
It lifts up its hands on high.

11 Sun, moon, stood back in their habitation,[11]
At the light of thine arrows, which flew,
At the shining of the lightning of thy spear.

12 In anger thou marchest through the earth;
In wrath thou treadest down the nations.

13 Thou goest forth for the salvation of thy people;
For the salvation of thine anointed:
Thou dashest in pieces the head from the house of the wicked,
Laying bare the foundation even to the neck. Selah.

14 Thou piercest with his own spears the chief of his captains,
That rush on like a tempest to scatter me;
Their rejoicing is to devour, as it were, the poor in secret.

15 Thou treadest upon the sea with thy horses,
Upon the foaming of many waters.

16 I heard, and my bowels trembled;
At the sound my lips quivered;
Rottenness entered my bones;
I tremble in my lower[12] parts,
That I am to wait[13] quietly for the day of distress,
When he that approaches the nation shall press upon it.

17 For[14] the fig tree will not blossom;
And there is no produce on the vines;
The fruit of the olive tree fails,
And the fields bear no food:
The flock is cut off from the fold;
And there are no cattle in the stalls:

18 But I will exult in Jehovah,
And rejoice in the God of my salvation.

19 Jehovah, the Lord, is my strength,

And makes my feet like the hinds,
And causes me to walk upon my high places.

To the precentor,[15] with my stringed instruments.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1. — עַל שִׁגְיֹנוֹת, *upon shigyonoth.* Keil derives it from שָׁגָה, *to err*, then *to reel to and fro*, a reeling song, *i. e.*, a song delivered in the greatest excitement, *dithyrambus; after dithyrambs, or after the manner of a martial and triumphal ode.* Kleinert: *nach Dithyrambenweise.*

Gesenius derives it from שָׁגָה, perhaps i. q. שָׂגָא, שָׂגָה, *to be great*, the letters שׁ and שׂ being interchanged.

[2 Ver. 3. — אֱלוֹהַּ, not used by any of the minor prophets except Habakkuk, in this verse and in chap. i. 11. It is most frequently used in the book of Job.

[3 Ver. 3. — תֵּימָן, *at, or on the right hand*, hence *the south*, the quarter on the right hand, when the face is toward the east.

Teman was a country probably named after the grandson of Esau (Gen. xxxvi. 11); perhaps a southern portion of the land of Edom, or, in a wider sense, that of the sons of the East, *Beni-Kedem.* Eusebius and Jerome mention Teman as a town in their day distant fifteen miles (according to Eusebius) from Petra, and a Roman post. Smith's *Dict. Bib.*

[4 Ver. 3. — הַר־פָּארָן, Deut. xxxiii. 2. See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Paran," and Robinson's *Bib. Res. in Pal.*, etc., vol. i., pp. 186 and 552.

[5 Ver. 4. — קַרְנַיִם, in the dual, poetical for rays of light. Arabic poets compare the first rays of the rising sun to *horns*, and hence give to the sun the poetical name of gazelle. Compare אַיֶּלֶת. Gesen., *Lex.* Kleinert: *Strahlen sind ihm zur Seite.*

[6 Ver. 4, etc. — וְשָׁם חֶבְיוֹן, *and there* — in the sun-like splendor, with the rays emanating from it — is the hiding of his omnipotence, *i. e.*, the place where his omnipotence hides itself. The splendor forms the covering of the Almighty God. Keil.

[7 Ver. 6. — וַיְמֹדֶד, derived by some from מָדַד, *to measure*, and by others from מוּד, *to be moved, to be agitated.* The LXX. read: Καὶ ἐσαλεύθη ἡ γῆ; the Vulgate has: *mensus est terram.* Luther renders it: *und mass das Land;* Keil: *sets the earth reeling;* Kleinert: *und misst die Erde.*

[8 Ver. 6. — הֲלִיכוֹת עוֹלָם לוֹ. Henderson considers these words as epexegetical of the preceding, and translates them: *His ancient ways.* Keil understands it as a substantive clause, and to be taken by itself: *everlasting courses, or goings are to him*, i. e., *He now goes along as he went along in the olden time.* Kleinert: *Die Pfade der Vorzeit schlägt er ein.*

[9 Ver. 7. — כּוּשָׁן, a lengthened form for כּוּשׁ. Whether it is intended to designate the African or the Arabian Cush is disputed. Gesenius, Maurer, Delitzsch, and others contend for the former; but the connection of the name with that of מִדְיָן, is decidedly in favor of the latter. Henderson.

[10 Ver. 9. — שְׁבֻעוֹת מַטּוֹת אֹמֶר is a very obscure clause, and has not been satisfactorily explained. Henderson renders it: "Sevens of spears was the word." LXX.: 'Εντείνων ἐντενεῖς τὸ τόξον σου ἐπὶ τὰ σκῆπτρα, λέγει κύριος; the Vulgate: *juramenta tribubus quæ locutus es:* Luther: *wie du geschworen hattest den Stämmen;* Kleinert: *die durch's Wort beschworenen Zuchtruthen.*

[11 Ver 11. — זְבֻלָה, the ה in this word indicates direction. The sun and moon *withdrew to their habitation.*

[12 Ver. 16. — תַּחַת, *the lower part, what is underneath.* תַּחְתַּי, *what is underneath me*, i. e., *my lower parts.*

[13 Ver. 16. — This clause explains the great fear that fell upon him. Vulgate: *ut requiescam in die tribulationis.* The LXX. do not translate אֲשֶׁר — 'Αναπαύσομαι ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεώς μου. Luther: *O dass ich ruhen möchte zur Zeit der Trübsal.* Kleinert: *dass ich ruhig entgegenharren soll dem Tage der Angst.*

[14 Ver. 17. — כִּי may be rendered *although*, as in the A. V., or *though*, as by Henderson: or it may be translated, *what time, when;* but it can also be rendered like the Greek γαρ, or the Latin *enim.* The LXX. render it in this verse by διότι; the Vulgate translates it *enim;* Luther, *denn;* and Kleinert, *denn da.* The sense is substantially the same in either case.

[15 Ver. 19. — לַמְנַצֵּחַ, from the Piel of נָצַח, signifying, *to be over* anything, *to be chief*, to *superintend* — *Dem Gesangmeister.* — C. E.]

EXEGETICAL.

The prophecy of the judgment of the world, under the form of a theophany, and already prepared by ii. 14, immediately follows, like Zeph. i. 7 (comp. Zech. ii. 13), the emphatic *favete linguis:* let all the world be silent before the Lord. That its contents are evidently just as much prophetic as the previous is evident from their entirely original character and from their having reference throughout to the future; and it has been furnished by the prophet himself (comp. Introd.) with the liturgical heading, subscription, and intermediate sign (*Selah*, vers. 3, 9, 13), for the reason that it is, in fact, by its rhythm, diction, and formal finish, conformed to the hymns and psalms adapted to performance [in the public service]. It is solely the application of a subjective notion of a psalm on the part of Delitzsch and Keil, when they make the entire song a mere lyrical effusion of subjective emotions, an echo of chaps. i. and ii. in the soul of the poet inspired with poetic feeling. Compare on ver. 2. It can be said at the most, that the

closing lyrical verses, 16–19, sustain a relation to the prophecy proper similar to that of Nah. ii. 12 ff. to Nah. ii. 1–11; but they do not cease thereby to belong to the prophecy. That the poetic form is selected has its reason in the fact, that as all prophecy involuntarily utters itself poetically in consequence of the elevation of the soul freed from the earth, so also the highest degree of the prophetical inspiration includes, at the same time, the highest degree of the poetical. We have examples of this in the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, which, in their greatest height, strike up the key of the Psalms. It entirely contradicts the thoroughly original and grand character of the hymn, when Delitzsch does not even allow it to pass as original, but brings it down to an imitation of Ps. lxxvii. (The reasons for this opinion, which Delitzsch brings together with great pains, and the most plausible of which he repeats in the *Commentary on the Psalms*, are only of a subjective demonstrative power; a more exact examination is not in place here, since the question for the understanding [of the hymn] is an equivalent one. Hupfeld gives the positive counter proof. Ps. iii. p. 345, Observ. 69.)

According to the contents the hymn is composed of the following constituent parts: —

I. The prophecy of the theophany itself; vers. 2–15.

II. The application of this prophecy; vers. 16–19.

The prophecy itself (vers. 2–15) is divided into—

(*a*) The *introitus*, ver. 2, five lines.

(*b*) First chief part: the approach of God, vers. 3–7, sixteen lines.

(*c*) *Transitus*, ver. 8, five lines.

(*d*) Second chief part: the operations of the judgment, vers. 9–13, sixteen lines.

(*e*) The concluding strophe, vers. 14, 15, seven lines.

The application is divided into two strophes of six lines each, and a concluding strophe [*Abgesang, Collect*] of five lines. [The rhythmical structure is determined somewhat differently, to wit, by the recurring *Selah*, which, in the second place, where it might be expected on account of the symmetry, is substituted in the text by a very old intermediate space; the theme of the hymn is divided into the following symmetrical groups: (1) seven lines (2–3 b); (2) fourteen lines (3 c–7); (3) seven lines (8–9 b); (4) fourteen lines (9 c–13); (5) seven lines (14, 15). The symmetry of the structure extends even (as is frequently the case in the Proverbs of Solomon) to the separate members, which generally (only with the exception of vers. 7, 8 c, 13 c–14, 16 d) consist of three words. [This of course refers to the Hebrew text. — C. E.] The knowledge of this is not unimportant for the interpretation. Comp. on ver. 15.]

The form of the theophany, *i. e.* of an appearance of God for judgment accompanied with the agitation of all the powers of nature and elements, is quite peculiar to the hymnology of the Old Testament and entirely born of its [O. T.] spirit. It is, namely, the correlate of the first appearance of the kind at the giving of the law upon Mt. Sinai (Ex. xix. 16 ff.), which in its turn refers back to the first appearances of God manifesting himself to the patriarchs: compare particularly, Gen. xv. From that appearance the hymns, which refer to a historical theophany, take their start, Deut. xxxiii.; Judges v. (comp. Ps. lxviii. 8 ff.; lxxvii. 10 ff.); Psalm xviii., which sums up the battles of God for his anointed, in the form of the theophany (comp. 2 Kings vi. 17), is included with these. But the use [of the O. T. hymns] is not restricted to this [a historical theophany]. For as God gave his law with such a proof of his glory, so also will the fulfillment and execution of the law, *the judgment*, be accompanied by such an appearance of God, coming either as then from the south out of the wilderness, or down from heaven. Of this the *prophetic* psalms l., xcvii. treat; furthermore Is. xxx. 27 ff.; lxiv. 1 ff. (with lxiii. 19 b) [19 b begins chap. lxiv. in the A. V.; but in the Hebrew Original, LXX., Vulgate, and Luther's Version, it closes chap. lxiii. — C. E.]; and most fully this prophecy. It lies in the nature of the subject, that in prophecies of this kind prophetic vision, poetic intuition, symbolism, and reality, are interwoven in a manner that cannot be fully explained by the finite understanding.

Heading. **A Prayer**, a general name of a song that can be sung in worship, hence also a collective name of the Psalms (lxxii. 20), **of Habakkuk,** — this passage shows plainly that the ל in the headings of the Psalms also is intended to indicate the author — **the prophet** (comp. chap. i. ver. 1) **after the manner of the dithyramb.** This liturgical definition is, like almost all preserved in the O. T., obscure; and its signification, since tradition is entirely unreliable in these things, can only be conjectured. Probably it is to be traced, like שִׁגָּיוֹן, Ps. vii. 1 (comp. Clauss on the passage), to the root שׁגה, to *err*, *reel*, and accordingly signifies, as a plur. abstr., the mode of the reeling song, the *cantio erratica*, the Dithyramb. [The Dithyramb (Epich., p. 72, Herod., i. 23, and Pindar) was a kind of poetry chiefly cultivated in Athens, of a lofty but usually inflated style, originally in honor of Bacchus, afterwards also of the other gods. It was always set in the Phrygian mode, and was at first antistrophic, but later usually monostrophic. It was the germ of the choral element in the Attic tragedy. It was sung to the flute, whilst the rest of the chorus danced in a circle round the altar of the god. From this circumstance the dithyrambic choruses were called Cyclian. — C. E.] It has no connection with the contents of the prophecy.

[Keil: As *shâgâh*, to err, then to reel to and fro, is applied to the giddiness both of intoxication and of love (Is. xxviii. 7; Prov. xx. 1; v. 20), *shiggâyōn* signifies reeling, and in the termination of poetry a reeling song, *i. e.*, a song delivered in the greatest excitement, or with a rapid change of emotion, *dithyrambus*. — C. E.]

Introitus. Ver. 2. **Jehovah, I have heard thy report** [rather *the report of thee:* the genitive is that of the object — C. E.]; not that mentioned i. 5 ff.; ii. 2 ff.; for he had not only heard that, but also written it down, and published it; but the report which he is just about to announce (comp. the retrospective reference, ver. 16; Ob. 1; Jer. xlix. 14; Jon. i.); the report of the grand appearance of Jehovah, in the impending judgment, which is drawing near, for the purpose of visiting with punishment the Holy Land, and that with a twofold power of execution (comp. Am. i. 2); so that in the Holy Land laid waste and purified by the judgment, God by means of the judgment overthrows the spoilers. The separate acts meet in a picture, as in Ps. xviii., before the vision of the seer. Before the power of this theophany rising upon his vision, and because the first moment[1] en-

1 [*Moment*, among other meanings, has that of essential

ters into his consciousness as a fellow sufferer with others (Micah i. 8) the prophet recoils: Therefore **I tremble,** I am afraid. This is the result of the manifestation of the mighty deeds of God (Ex. xv. 14; Ps. xviii. 45). **Jehovah revive thy work in the midst of the years.** What work is meant? Chap. i. 5 spoke of a work which was to be accomplished in a wonderful manner, and under that was understood the desolation of the earth by the Chaldæan. That work cannot be meant here; for although the prophet, without human weakness, has to communicate the severe chastisements of God, yet he cannot directly pray for them. That work, moreover, was not called פעל יי, but it was a work by itself, whose distinguishing feature was the fact, that, although ordained of God, it nevertheless wrought out itself, it had its power and energy in itself (i. 7). A work of grace must be intended by which Jehovah proves Himself, in his peculiar, well-known way, the Holy One of Israel (i. 12), a work by means of which the impending calamities are endurable (comp. בְּקֶרֶב צָרָה תְּחַיֵּנִי, Ps. cxxxviii. 7). And certainly the meaning is here: quicken it in the midst of the years; חִיָּה has the meaning of revivifying, of quickening anew (Ps. lxxx. 19; lxxxv. 7 [6]), a work of grace, which had occurred once already in the beginning of the years, and whose recurrence Israel now needs, in order to be joyful again. And this consists with no other act of God than the deliverance from Egypt, which is described, Ps. xliv. 2, in entirely similar words, and so this passage understands Ps. lxxvii. 13. It stands in fact at the beginning of the years, namely, at the beginning of the national existence (Hos. xi. 1). Then do thy work anew in the midst of the years; **in the midst of the years make known;** the imperative continued by the imperfect as in Ps. xxxi. 2 ff.; to make known is the same as to accomplish before all eyes (Ps. ciii. 7). The explanation of the work, which has been given, agrees well not only with the circumstance that in fact in the following context (comp. namely, the "old paths," ver. 6) a return of the wonderful works, that were performed at the time of that deliverance, is predicted, but also with the concluding clause: **in wrath** (comp. Is. xxviii. 21) **remember mercy,** which, according to what has been said, evidently means, if thou intendest to humble us again, do thou also again deliver us.

The announcement follows the exclamation of feeling: vers. 3–7. *The approach of Jehovah from the South.* **Eloah** (poetic archaism instead of אלהים, comp. Deut. xxxii. 15) **comes from Teman, and the Holy One** (comp. on i. 12) **from the mountains of Paran.** The southern country, as in Judges v. and Ps. lxviii. (יְשִׁימוֹן), the point from which God sets out, because He approaches from Sinai (Ps. lxviii. 9 [8]), is introduced (compare Deut. xxxiii.) by the enumeration of two divisions, namely, Teman, which is the same as Edom, and forms the East division (comp. Ob. 9 with Jer. xlix. 22); and the mountainous region of Paran, between Edom and Egypt (1 Kings xi. 18), forming the West division. Compare the periphrase, Gilead and Manasseh, Ephraim and Judah (Ps. lx. 9), for Canaan. In regard to the *Selah,* compare Sommer, *Bib. Essays,* i. 1 ff., Delitzsch, *Psalter* (1867), p. 70 ff. While God approaches, **his splendor covers the heavens** (comp. Ps. viii. 1), the clear brightness of his glory making its appearance (Ps. civ. 1 f.; Luke i. 78), which like the purple light of the morning (Hos. vi. 3) covers the heavens, and like a sea of fire sinks on the earth: **and the earth is filled with his glory** (comp. ii. 14; Is. vi. 3 f.). תְּהִלָּה, properly *praise,* here by metonymy the object of praise, is synonymous with כָּבוֹד, as in Ps. lxvi. 2. The flaming glory of Jehovah filling everything, is a vision of such excessive sublimity, that one scarcely dares to follow the prophet in spirit to meditate upon it.

element, part of a whole. The two moments, that make up the prophetic vision here, are destruction and purification. It is the first which causes the prophet to recoil. — C. E.]

Ver. 4. Out of this glory — the veil of God — bursting upon the view, shoot forth lightnings like rays (comp. Ps. xviii. 13; Matt. xxiv. 27), like the rays of the rising sun through the morning sky: **a brightness bursts forth like sunlight** (Is. v. 30), **and horns,** *i. e.* rays (Ex. xxxiv. 29 f.) **are at his side** [*hand*]. The Arabic poetry and popular language also call the first rays of the rising sun horns, antlers, and conformably with this they call the sun himself a gazelle (comp. Ps. xxii. 1). Hence also the dual, מִיָּדוֹ is used in a general sense: at the side, equivalent to "on both sides"; compare the expression, "before and behind" [at his presence, at his feet — C. E.], in the following verse (Delitzsch). [מִיָּדוֹ signifies literally "from his hand," but since the hand is by the side, it is equivalent to "at his side." "As the disc of the sun is surrounded by a splendid radiance, so the coming of God is inclosed by rays on both sides." The suffix in לוֹ refers to God. — C. E.]. **And there,** in this radiant splendor, **is the veil,** properly the hiding of his omnipotence (comp. Ez. i. 27). He is so resplendent himself, that even the light is only his garment (Ps. civ. 2). The garment of his omnipotence, by virtue of which He is judge of the world, and at the service of which are the satellites of the judgment.

Ver. 5. **Before Him goes the plague, and burning pestilence follows his feet.** So had Hos. xiii. 14 predicted it: I will be thy plague, O death (the plague, which provides for thee the victim), I will be thy pestilence, O grave. With these angels of death he had, approaching from the south, destroyed also the army of Sennacherib (2 Kings xix. 35).

Ver. 6. **Then He stands** (He alone is calm amidst all the violent commotion, comp. Micah v. iii.) **and measures the earth.** The measuring, מדד is a function of God as the judge of the world; also in Ps. lx. 8 (Kal is employed to signify parcelling out tracts of land, comp. Micah ii. 4), and Is. lxv. 7 (requiting with the right measure), comp. 2 Sam. viii 2. He measures the earth, *i. e.*, He measures the countries and their practices, in order to execute a right judgment. [Delitzsch and others more conformably to the parallelism, following the Targum: He sets [the earth] reeling; however, the signification (מוּד = מוֹט) cannot be verified.] **He looks,** examines with a scrutinizing look (Ps. x. 14), **and makes the heathen tremble.** [יַתֵּר is the *Hiphil* of נָתַר, and means to cause to shake or tremble. — C. E.] God is a spirit, and his spiritual acts are of complete energy and efficiency; his hearing is granting; his seeing, helping or judging; his rebuking, annihilation. **Then the primeval mountains,** the unchangeable [mountains] (Micah vi. 2; comp. Deut. xxxiii. 15) **burst asunder; the hills of the early world**

sink down. His are **the paths of olden time,** *i. e.*, **He follows them:** the paths in which He then conducted his people from Egypt into the land [of Canaan] (lxviii. 25 [24]).

Hence also now, as then (comp. Ex. xv. 14 ff.) the nations on both sides of the way fall into fear and confusion. It is quite plain that ver. 7, in which the borderers on the Red Sea, on the east and west, are mentioned as the trembling nations, refers to that event [the deliverance from Egypt] of the ancient time. **I,** the prophet, **see,** in vision, **the tents of Cushan,** *i. e.*, Cush, Ethiopia, west, on the sea, **in affliction** (comp. Jer. iv. 15). (So Luther, Gesenius, Maurer, Delitzsch, Keil, Hitzig, and others. According to the Targum, Talmud, Cushan of Mesopotamia is meant (Judges iii. 8 ff.) [which I let pass, it does not agree with the arrangement, Luth.]; Ewald considers it the same as Jokshan). [Smith, *Dict. of the Bible*, art. "Chushan," thinks that Cushan is possibly the same as Cushan-rishathaim (A. V. Chushan-) King of Mesopotamia (Judges iii. 8, 10). See article, "Cushan." — C. E.] **The curtains of the land of Midian,** on the east of the Red Sea, **tremble.**

Ver. 8. A lyrical intermediate strophe, which, at the same time, serves as a connecting link with what follows: the poet stops in the description, in order to take a new start (compare similar pauses, Gen. xlix. 14; Judges v. 12; Ps. lxviii. 20 ff.; xviii. 21 ff.). He inquires after the purpose of the approaching God. The question is evidently not put for an answer; but it is a poetical form. **Was it against the rivers, O Jehovah, against the rivers that thy wrath was kindled?** Jehovah is in the vocative, because it would [otherwise] be connected with חרה by ל·. [The Hebrew idiom is חרה ל, *to burn to* one (*scil.*, anger), *to feel angry, be wroth.* See Nordheimer's *Heb. Gram.*, vol. ii. p. 227. — C. E.] **Or was thy fury against the sea?** The sea and rivers also retire before the approaching glory of God (Ps. cxiv. 3, 5). אם connects cumulative questions, even when they have nothing disjunctive in them (Gen. xxxvii. 8). **That thou didst ride upon thy horses,** the cherub wings of the wind (Ps. xviii. 11) **upon thy chariot of salvation?** The elements, clouds and winds, here as everywhere, servants, messengers, media of the manifestation of God (Ps. civ. 4), are symbolized as horses and chariots, because the judgment is a warlike act of the Lord of Hosts, and chariots and horses are the instruments of war (Micah v. 9 [10]). [When complex terms receive a suffix, they can stand, according to Hebrew idiom, in the stat. constr., Ewald, sec. 291 b.] [This construction is poetical. — C. E.] The signification of *victory* for ישועה, denied by some, is evidently implied in that of "salvation," both here and in Is. lix. 17, and in the passages, where the noun occurs in the plural (Ps. xviii. 51, and other places). [Keil: "By describing the chariots of God as chariots of salvation, the prophet points at the outset to the fact, that the riding of God has for its object the salvation or deliverance of his people. — C. E.] With this warlike turn the transition is immediately made to —

The second principal part, vers. 9–13, which describes how the judgment is put in execution. Ver. 9 a, b, continues the picture of God as the warrior, begun in ver. 8. **Thy bow is made quite bare.** [It is unnecessary to invent, with the interpreters, for תְּעוֹר, the stem עִיר *nudare*, which has no exi tence, of which the form [in question] would be the 3 fem. imp. Niph.; it is the 3 imp Kal from ערד (Is. xxxii. 11), comp. יֵרֹעַ from רעע (Prov. xi. 15). עֶרְיָה is an anomalous feminine form of the infin. absolute from the cognate stem ערה (comp. Ewald, sec. 240 d.; 312 b, 2); and so the words are closely connected: it would have been prosaic and according to rule to have said עָרוֹר תְּעוֹר.] [Gesenius, Fürst, and Keil take תְּעוֹר from עוּר, and עֶרְיָה as a noun. — C. E.] God's judgment is represented as an arrow upon the string also in Ps. xxi. 13 [12] comp. Lam. iii. 12). But the bow, and in general God's weapons of war, are not to be taken in the strictest literal sense, but they are, as the prophet adds in explanatory apposition, **the scourges sworn by the word.** מטה has nowhere the signification of arrow, which would suit excellently the bow, and which is held by some interpreters (*e. g.*, Meier, *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1842, 1031 f.); even in ver. iv. it can at the most, as in 2 Sam. xiv. 17, signify spears. Were it to be actually taken in this sense, then, since it introduces a new figure, it must be joined to קשת by ו. But certainly the אמר indicates that here the figure passes over into the thing [reality]; hence we understand, as we have said, the clause rather as an explanatory adjunct, and accordingly מטות as scourges, calamities; compare this usage of the language for the chastisements threatened by the prophets: Micah vi. 9 (hear the rod!); Ez. vii. 11; Is. x. 5; ix. 3; xiv. 5. They are sworn to by the word, *i. e.* the Word of God; comp. Micah vi. 9; Deut. xxxii. 40 f.; and as to the absolute use of אמר for the omnipotent Word of God, which opens a way for his great deeds in the world, compare Ps. lxviii. 34 [33]; 11 [12]. אמר is in the acc. instr. like חַרְבְּךָ, Ps. xvii. 13. The participle שׁבועות (comp. Ez. xxi. 23 [28] is separated from this instrumentalis belonging to it, because it should stand emphatically at the beginning, and for the same reason it is also placed before its substantive; consequently it is to be considered as the stat. constr., שׁבועות מטות, like נסיכי אדם, Micah v. 4 (5). Delitzsch gives a synopsis of more than a hundred explanations of this difficult passage). After the *Selah* the prophet turns again, ver. 9 c–12, to the description of the powerful catastrophe of Nature which, according to the parallelism pervading the Holy Scriptures between the mikrokosmos and makrokosmos, man and visible nature, accompanies the judgment. **With streams thou dividest the earth.** [Delitzsch, Bäumlein, Keil: into rivers thou dividest the earth; without sense; Hitzig: Thou dividest rivers to earth; Ewald: Thou dividest streams to land, etc.]. Our translation [נהרות, acc. instr. like אֹמֶר] is justified by Micah i. 4, where the surface of the earth is cleft into gulleys by the masses of water rushing from the mountains.

Ver. 10. Whence the torrents? **The mountains saw thee and trembled, the water-flood rushes on.** Thunder-storm and violent rains, as a representation of the most powerful agitation of the elements, accompany the theophany, comp. on Micah, at the place cited. From the mountains the prophet turns to the extreme opposite, the depths of the sea: **the abyss raises its voice** — the deep water, that surrounds the main-land (Jon. ii. 6) and lies spread out under the main-land

(Gen. xlix. 25) is here, like the mountains, poetically personified. The voice of the abyss is the roaring of the waters shut up underneath (Job xxviii. 14). **It raises its hands on high.** רוּם is not the subject-nominative, which would yield no sense, since the height cannot stretch out its hands over itself; but it is the accusative of direction (2 Kings xix. 22). The archaic form יָדֵיהוּ is selected for pictorial effect, instead of the current form יָדָיו. By the hands of the abyss one will properly understand the waves of water thrown visibly on high, which, as at the Deluge, break through the flood-gates of the earth (Nah. ii. 7), and unite with the gushing rains from heaven (comp. Gen. vii. 11).

Ver. 11. **The sun, the moon,** either, enter into their dwelling, *i. e.*, withdraw so that one sees them no more, and darkness comes on (Delitzsch, Hitzig, Keil); or, **stand still,** continue standing terrified **in their place,** just where they were standing at the beginning of the judgment. The latter, on account of עמד and the reference to Jos. x. is the more probable, זבול is a place of abode (comp. Ps. xlix. 25 with ciii. 16); the precise idea of dwelling arises only from the addition of בית (1 Kings vi. 13; 2 Chron. vi. 2).

At the light of thine arrows, which flew, at the shining of thy spear. The holy majesty of God manifesting itself is turned to the majesty of a judge executing justice; the holy light into the devouring fire (Is. x. 17).

The discourse, vers. 12, 13, turns directly to the acts of judgment connected with the salvation of Israel: **In anger thou marchest** (poetical expression, as in Judges v. 4; Ps. lxviii. 8) **the land,** first of all the Holy Land, since He comes from Sinai (comp. Micah i. 2). **In indignation thou thrashest the heathen,** as of old (Ps. lxviii. 22 [21]).

Ver. 13. **Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people** — ישע, as a nom. verb. is construed with the Acc. (Ewald, sec. 239 a) — **for the salvation of thy anointed,** by whom, according to the parallelism, is to be understood not so much the unworthy Jehoiakim as the nation itself (Ps. lxxxiv. 10 [9]; cv. 15). (LXX., Rosenmuller, Ewald, Hitzig.)

Thou crushest the head (Ps. cx. 6) **of the house of the wicked, laying bare the foundation even to the neck.** The house of the wicked is the Chaldæan nation viewed as a family; compare the house of Israel, Ps. cxv. 12, and above. Whilst it is compared to a human body (compare the inverted comparison, Job xxii. 16; Eccles. xii. 3 f.) its entire destruction (πανολεθρία, Jo. Schmid) is represented by the enumeration of the separate parts, head, lower extremities, and neck. The infin. abs. עָרוֹת, to lay bare, *i. e.*, from the foundation, to raze to the ground (Ps. cxxxvii. 7) stands as the abl. gerundii, Ges., sec. 131, 2.

The concluding portion [of the description of the theophany — C. E.], vers. 14, 15, carries out this thought still further. It differs from what precedes by beginning with shorter rhythms. **Thou piercest through with his spear** (comp. on ver. 9), with the weapons of the wicked one (comp. Ps. vii. 17 (16), **the head of his princes,** comp. פְּרָזוֹן, Judges v. 7–11; LXX. on the same passage, and Ges., s. v. in *Thes.* The signification of hordes (Delitzsch, Keil) cannot be evolved from the circumstance that פְּרָזִי designates an inhabitant of the פְּרָזוֹת, the plain: the passage treats of warriors, who have entered by force, not of peaceful settlers. His princes, **they rush in** (comp. i. 11) to disperse me, properly to scatter **me**: the prophet speaks in the name of the people; **and they rejoice as if they were allowed to devour the poor in secret;** literally, whose rejoicing is, as it were, in devouring, etc. (comp. Ps. x. 5 ff.). The ל concomitantiæ as in ver. 11.

Ver. 15. **Thou treadest upon the sea, Thy horses upon the billows of great waters.** Usually, Thou walkest on the sea (Umbreit, Hitzig) or Thou walkest through the sea (Delitzsch, Keil) *with thy horses.* The exposition has its origin in the Masoretic interpunction, which, in following the rhythmical structure of the hymn, unites the first three words. But already in the preceding verse the rhythmical unity does not consist of three, but of two words; and even if in ver. 15 we take the number three as a foundation [of rhythmical unity] the rhythmical arrangement indicated by the Masorites would still not involve the logical (comp. Ps. xxx. 8). Our exposition is much simpler, by which the last four words, with the verb דָּרַךְ, which is naturally to be supplied, form a sentence. In this way the dragging occasioned by the following acc. instr. סוסיך as well as the still more pompous conception of the second member disappears, and the clause [156] stands in apposition. דרך has then both constructions, with ב as in Deut. xi. 24, and with the Acc. as in Job xx. 15. Following Ps. lxxvii. 20 (19) Delitzsch finds in the passage a reminiscence of the Red Sea; Hitzig understands by the sea the host of the enemy. The latter on account of the connection with what immediately precedes, is the more probable (comp. Is. xvii. 12 ff.). And it appears to me nearest the truth according to the joint connection of the combined thoughts: As thou didst once lead thy people through the Red Sea, and marching before didst cast down the waters, so wilt thou now march through, renewing thy work (ver. 2) and treading down the surging mass of the enemy's host.

The Subjective Application of the Prophecy follows, with trembling, but confident faith, in the third principal part, vers. 16–19. After the vast picture has rolled past his eyes, the prophet looks back to the beginning. **I have heard this,** — this divine judgment just described, which depends upon the sad condition of the land's being overrun by the Chaldæans; — **my belly trembled** (comp. Is. xvi. 11). **At the cry,** crying aloud, **my lips quivered.** Gew.: At the sound my lips quivered (Delitzsch, chattered). צלל cannot mean to chatter, for the lips do not chatter, but the teeth. We translate it according to the analogy of לַשָּׁוְא and לְמִרְמָה, Ex. xx. 7; Ps. xxiv. 4; comp. Is. xv. 5. **Rottenness,** the feeling of complete weakness (Prov. xii. 4) **comes into my bones, and under me, down to my feet** (Ewald, sec. 217 k), **I tremble: that I** (אשׁר, *quod,* as in 1 Sam. ii. 23; Ps. lxxxix. 52) **am to wait quietly** (נוּחַ, of silent submission, as in Lam. iii. 26) **for the day of distress** (comp. on ver. 2 and on Ob. 12), **for the approach of him**

against the people, who is about to oppress them. ל, *sensu infenso*, as in Job xx. 27. After the grand consolatory picture, the prophet once more indulges, for himself and his hearers, in this gloomy view, which he draws of the nearest future.

Ver. 17. **For the fig tree will not blossom, and no yield will be on the vine — the fruit of the olive tree fails**: it shrivels up. [Kleinert translates מַעֲשֵׂה־זַיִת, *das Ansetzen, die Fruchtansätze des Oelbaums*; it is literally fruit of the olive tree. Compare the phrase עָשָׂה פְּרִי to bear fruit. — C. E.] Figs, wine, olive tree are mentioned as the noblest products of the land (Micah iv. 4; vi. 15). **And the corn-field yields no food.** שְׁדֵמוֹת, fields, is *plurale tantum*, with a singular signification, equivalent to שָׂדֶה hence construed with the singular (Ges., sec. 146, 2). **The flock is away,** literally cut off **from the fold, and there are no cattle in the stalls.** As in Joel 1 f. the desolation caused by the enemy (e. f.) seems to be summed up with the natural calamities that befall the land (a–d).

But out of the distress the prophet, and with him the people, raises his eye to the object of faith, gathering words of hope and confidence from the Psalms, as in Micah vi. 7. Ver. 18. **But I** — used emphatically to express the antithesis: notwithstanding all that, just as in Micah vii. 7 — **will rejoice upon Jehovah.** בְּ, not *in* God, but as in the verbs expressing delight generally, indicating the ground of the joy, comp. ἐπί, Luke i. 47. **I will exult in the God of my salvation,** who procures my salvation, and upon whom my salvation rests (ver. 13; Micah vii. 7). For —

Ver. 19. **Jehovah, the Lord,** the God of Israel, whom other nations do not have, nor know (Micah iv. 5; comp. Gen. ix. 25 (26)), **is my strength** (Ps. xxvii. 1), **and He makes my feet like hinds**; a concise comparison, equivalent to the feet of hinds, borrowed from Ps. xviii. 34 (33). This is not merely a figure for warlike activity in pursuing, but more commonly for the irresistible strength, which springs from confidence in God (comp. Is. xl. 29 ff.), (Delitzsch). **He makes me to walk on my high places** (from Ps. xviii. 34 (33); comp. Deut. xxxiii. 29), — upon the heights of salvation, which stand at the end of the way of tribulation, and which only the righteous man climbs by the confidence of faith (ii. 4). With this prospect of faith resulting from vers. 4–15, the hymn closes naturally and beautifully.

The Liturgical Subscription, — **to the chief singer on my stringed instruments,** — corresponds to the heading, ver. 1 (compare the Introduction, 3). בּ cannot, as Hitzig thinks, represent the stat. abs.; but it is, as in these musical expressions generally, the בּ of accompaniment (Ps. xxxiii. 2, 3). Habakkuk accordingly dispatched his hymn to the director of the temple-music (comp. the Comm. on Ps. iv. 1), and stipulated for the accompaniment of the performance. To accompany the hymn for the praise of God with stringed instruments was customary among those skilled in music (Ps. lxxvii. 7 (6)). Not merely the Levites, but also other prominent members of the congregation and moved by the Spirit, as, *e. g.*, the king, had the right and were accustomed to do this in the temple (Is. xxxviii. 20).

[Keil: "The last words, לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹתָי, do not form part of the contents of the supplicatory ode, but are a subscription answering to the heading in ver. 1, and refer to the use of the ode in the worship of God, and simply differ from the headings בִּנְגִינוֹת לַמְנַצֵּחַ in Ps. iv., vi., liv., lv., lxvii., and lxxvi. through the use of the suffix in בִּנְגִינוֹתָי." Through the words, "*to the president* (of the temple-music, or the conductor) *in accompaniment of my stringed playing*," the prophet appoints his psalm for use in the public worship of God accompanied by his stringed playing. Hitzig's rendering is grammatically false, "to the conductor of my pieces of music;" for בְּ cannot be used as a periphrasis for the genitive, but when connected with a musical expression, only means *with* or *in the accompaniment of* (בּ *instrumenti* or *concomitantiæ*). Moreover, נְגִינוֹת does not mean pieces of music, but simply a song, and the playing upon stringed instruments, or the stringed instrument itself (see at Ps. iv.). The first of these renderings gives no suitable sense here, so that there only remains the second, viz.: "playing upon stringed instruments." But if the prophet, by using this formula, stipulates that the ode is to be used in the temple, accompanied by stringed instruments, the expression *binginōthai*, with *my* stringed playing, affirms that he himself will accompany it with his own playing, from which it has been justly inferred that he was qualified, according to the arrangements of the Israelitish worship, to take part in the public performance of such pieces of music as were suited for public worship, and therefore belonged to the Levites, who were entrusted with the conduct of the musical performance of the temple.

Alexander on Is. xxxviii. 20: "The singular form, *my songs*, refers to Hezekiah as the author of this composition; the plurals, *we will sing* and *our lives*, to the multitude who might be expected to join in his public thanksgiving, not only at first, but in after ages."

Kleinert has adduced no proof, except the single case of Hezekiah, which does not seem to be conclusive, that others besides Levites were accustomed to take part in the performance of the Temple-music. David divided four thousand Levites into twenty-four classes, who sang psalms and accompanied them with music. Each of these classes was superintended by a leader, מְנַצֵּחַ placed over it; and they performed the duties, which devolved upon them, each class a week at a time in succession, 1 Chron. xvi. 5; xxiii. 4, 5; xxv. 1–31; comp. 2 Chron. v. 12, 13. This arrangement was continued with occasional interruptions. 2 Chron. v. 12–14; xxix. 27; xxxv. 15; Ezra iii. 10; Neh. xii. 45–47; 1 Macc. iv. 54; xiii. 51. — C. E.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

Concerning the nature of the theophany see the Exegetical Exposition.

The works of God are all profoundly connected with one another. The soul of this connection is the revelation-principle, *the light*. With the shining of the light the physical creation begins, and each day is a copy of it [the physical creation] (Ps. civ., comp. Herder, *W W. zur Rel. u. Theol.*, i. 56 ff.; v. 70 ff.); from a fresh shining in [upon us]

of the light the prophets expect the removal of the disturbance in the moral world (Hos. vi. 3; Is. ix., and this hymn); and every governing act from the spirit of God is a prefiguration of this future [renovation] (2 Sam. xxiii. 4). A shining of the light into the darkness, is the fulfillment of these expectations (John i. 5). The connection between the economy of the Old Testament and that of the New is this, that the spiritual meaning is evolved, with increasing clearness, from the physical groundwork. But this is in the midst of the years. At the end of the years the entire *physical* nature will be restored to the sphere of the *spiritual* light.

For between these two spheres there exists also an indissoluble connection. As the destruction of the original moral unity between God and mankind reflected itself on nature (Gen. iii.), (and hence the prophets expect the removal of terrors and discord from the time of the salvation [the last time, or time of the Messiah], Is. xi.), so the last consequence of sin, the judgment, is accompanied by the fearful commotion of the elements; before the avenging God march the most terrible judgments: the sighing of nature (Rom. viii.) becomes groaning and shrieking; but these again are only the travail-throes of the pure and glorious new birth. After the darkness and terror at the death of Jesus follows the resurrection of the dead.

On the other hand the coming of God to the judgment is organically connected with the issue of the document, according to which the judgment is to take place. It is a coming from Sinai. And as a coming to the relief and deliverance of captive Israel, it is associated with the prototype of their deliverances, — their emancipation from Egypt. It is indeed always something new, which Jehovah does, and yet always only a revival of the old; He is a steadfast and unchangeable God, and perfectly uniform in his manifestations, and always acknowledges the beginnings of his actions. However strange his works and revelations appear, considered *a priori*, so strange that the view of them is unsupportable; yet when He goes forth, He goes forth for the salvation of his people. He is a faithful and concealed God.

Every renewal of the wrath and pity of God is one of the gradual fulfillments of the protevangelium (Gen. iii.), that the serpent is indeed permitted to bruise the holy seed on the heel, on account of sin, but that again and again its head is crushed (ver. 14); and it is a gradual revival of the proto-prophecy (1 Kings xix.), according to which, the still small voice, in which God is, comes, after the wild agitations of the terrible judgment which goes before Him.

In this all-embracing unity of the work of God lies the key to the understanding of intuitive prophecy. Standing upon its watch-tower (ii. 1) it sees, over the scene of confusion, the work of God in its unity and entireness, as if its parts were placed side by side, and it leaves to the succession of time to carry into effect successively the parts of that [work], which it sees as one. Thus the individual fulfillments are like coverings, which drawn over the picture and transparent, fall off one after the other, until the substance, which lies in the nature of God Himself, the *Cabodh* [glory] of Jehovah, shall arrive at its perfect manifestation. In the mean time it finds in the combined view ground enough to rejoice on [*über*, see on ver. 18 — C. E.] God, for the certainty of salvation is the true central feature of the picture. God is neither in the storm, and tempest, and earthquake, which go before Him, neither is He in the fiery chariots and horsemen; but behind all these in the still small voice. When those events going before have purified the high places, God sets his people likewise purified upon them. Then Mount Zion is higher than all mountains (Micah v.).

CRUSIUS: The things, which the prophets announce, are exhibited (*complexe*) in a comprehensive picture, so that they are taken into the eye all at once in their whole extent, or κατὰ τὸ ἀποτελέσμα, *i. e.*, according to the form, which the thing will have at the time of its full accomplishment.

SCHMIEDER (on ver. 13): The picture might be still more comprehensive, if, in accordance with Dan. ii. 31 ff., we conceive the entire succession of hostile empires as the image of one man or house, whose colossal size falls under the judgments of God, after its head is broken off.

BECK: The promise enters upon a new active development, when corruption of morals and distress reached with rapid steps their culminating point in the Exile. As on the one side the character of guilt and penal liability impressed itself always more generally and more perceptibly upon the life, soon the other side, particularly among the better sort, a despair of the means of delivery lying within their own reach, and a longing for reconciliation and redemption, directed to help from another source, must always have increased the more, but without being able to find thoroughly its true development and satisfaction otherwise than in the ground of Divine grace. For from it proceeds the consolation of deliverance and reconciliation, in such a manner, however, that the future salvation is never to be expected in a human way, but only from the Word and Arm and Spirit of Jehovah.

HOMILETICAL.

The consolation of prophecy in the last tribulations of the people of God.

1. These tribulations must and will come (ver. 2 a, 16, 17).

2. But the same God, who decrees them, will also turn them away and put down all his enemies (Is. liv. 10) (ver. 2 b–15).

3. And the final salvation is certain, therefore the Church can already, in the midst of troubles, maintain a joyful heart (vers. 18, 19).

Ver. 2. It is enjoined in the kingdom of God to rejoice with trembling. That easy indifference, which relies upon the forbearance and promises of God, without considering, with profound earnestness, his powerful wrath and the severity of his judgments, is a disposition of heart not well pleasing to Him. Rather from the knowledge that no one can stand before Him, if he will only consider (ver. 6) what sin and wrong are done, ought the prayer for mercy to come from every lip. If some are saved, yet no one has any claim to it; for it is alone *his* work. — Ver. 3. The eye of the prophet standing upon his watch-tower turns to the south. In that direction lay Bethlehem, whence, according to Micah, the Messiah was to come. — Vers. 4, 5. The hand of God is also in that, which appears to us the most hostile and the least consistent with his nature full of life and light. If men do not prepare a way for Him, then He must prepare it for Himself. — Ver. 6. The judgment proceeds according to strict justice, not in precipitate, but in holy, rigorously distributive wrath; without respect of persons, but with strict regard to

the facts. The highest things in the world, which appear to the eye of man altogether unassailable and indestructible, sink before the glance of God's eye into dust and nothing. The Word is everywhere God's weapon and instrument. By the Word of his mouth all things were created; before the Word they perish; the Word is a hammer, which breaks the rocks. Wind and sea are obedient to Him; what will men oppose? They raise their weapons (ver. 14) in order to destroy themselves mutually; they do not hurt Him. If He cuts off the head of wickedness, then the remainder of it, though it flow like a sea, will not be able to continue, but it will be crushed. — Ver. 10 f. It is a great matter, that we have the power to be tranquil in the time of tribulation, but it is not easy (Matt. xxvi. 37 ff.). And it is the less easy since the affliction is not caused merely by the wickedness and provocation of the enemy, but by the presence of God's hand besides In this lies the smarting sting of the chastisement. — Ver. 18. But yet this sorrow is not worthy to be compared with the glory, which is to be revealed in us? If we are of good cheer when cast down, then we are the more certain that He will place us upon the high places. It is this alone that can banish from us what is not God's power, and what is unworthy of his salvation; what troubles us. Hard as it is for us to bring ourselves to this, we will then nevertheless be tranquil and free. The lighter the burden the swifter the course to salvation (ii. 3).

LUTHER: Ver. 2. The prophet says: History says this of thee, that thou art such a wonderful God as to afford help in the midst of trouble; thou castest down and raisest up; thou destroyest when thou intendest to build, and killest him to whom thou givest life (1 Sam. ii. 6 ff.); thou doest not as the world does, which at the very beginning attempts to prevent misfortune and continues involved in it, but thou bringest us into the midst of it, and drawest us out again. *In the midst of the years* means just at the right time: He knows well how to find the means to render help neither too soon, nor too late. For in case He brought help too soon we would not learn to despair of ourselves and would continue presumptuous; in case He brought it too late, we would not learn to believe. *To revive* and *to make known* are nearly the same thing, only that to revive is to perform the miracle and bring relief; but to make known means that we should be sensible of and delight in it. He who desires to be saved must learn so to know God. It is consolatory to believers, but intolerable to the ungodly. — Ver. 6. At the Red Sea He stood between Israel and the Egyptians, and measured off the land so that the Egyptians could not proceed farther than He had allotted to them. — Ver. 16. A joyful heart is half the man, a sorrowful heart makes even the bones weak. — Ver. 19. The Lord is still my God. Of this we will be so glad, that we will run and spring like hinds, so nimble are our feet to become; and we will no longer wade and creep in mire, but for perfect delight we will soar and fly in the high places and do nothing but sing joyfully and pursue all kinds of delightful employment. This is to take place when the Babylonian sceptre is cursed and destroyed, and we are redeemed and the kingdom comes.

STARKE: Ver. 1. Preachers must pray earnestly for the welfare of their hearers and of the whole church. — Ver. 2. The remembrance of God is not an inactive, but an active and busy remembrance, since He actually increases faith, and causes the faithful to taste his sweetness, presence, and assistance. Even if He scourges his children, He does not cease to be their father, and to remember his mercy (Lam. iii. 33). — Ver. 3. The reason that God causes the great deeds which He has done of old to be written down, is that such deeds may be made known to all men upon earth, and that men may thence learn his majesty and glory. — Ver. 7. We should ascribe to God the brave deeds of great heroes, by which they have assisted the Church of the Lord.—Ver. 9. God bends, as it were, his bow, when He would warn impenitent people of coming calamity. — Ver. 12. When God intends to execute penal judgments, He proceeds by degrees. — Ver. 15. The ungodly man is like a tempest, which passes by and vanishes; but the righteous man continues forever. — Ver. 16. The pious, as well as the godless, are terrified at the divine threatenings, but with a great difference. — Ver. 18. In tribulation we ought not to look only upon the blows which we suffer, but also upon the gracious deliverance which ensues. — Ver. 19. Servants of God do not despise music, but only give directions how it should be properly used in the praise of God.

PFAFF: Ver. 2. Behold how merciful and kind God is. In the midst of tribulation He remembers mercy, yes, in the midst of tribulation He causes his children to feel the strongest consolations. — Ver. 3. How great is the majesty of our God, proof of which He has given in the giving of his law and in the destruction of his enemies. — Ver. 8 ff. As God formerly led his Israel gloriously into the land of Canaan and protected them against his enemies, so will He also gloriously protect the spiritual Israel of the New Covenant against all enemies.

RIEGER: Ver. 1. So can contemplation and prayer even at this day alternate in the treatment of the prophetic Word. — Ver. 2. The prophet shows in the very beginning what was in the bottom of his heart, namely, a calm, holy fear of God occasioned by the past, and a good confidence acquired for the future. God's work in Christ Jesus, and the making of it known to the whole world, fell in the middle of the world's age, as it was fitting for the light of the world. If at the same time confusion may seem to exist on the earth, and judgments, of whatever kind they may be, may press upon a people, yet on account of this grace, which is through Christ Jesus, mercy is conspicuous far above judgment. — Ver. 3–15. The prophet recalls in his memory how God had judged from the beginning of the world, and how all former proofs in the midst of Israel give a ground of hope and confidence for the future; because all the works and ways of God in their great diversity have nevertheless a coherent relation, and always meet in this, that in tribulation God yet remembers mercy, and that from the most terrible commotions still something gracious comes forth. — Ver. 16 ff. But indeed if one discovers a view of the kingdom of God, be it ever so beautiful, behind the judgments, yet it fills him with dread that room is to be made for the good only thus, and we are reminded of what will still thereby be stripped from us and ours. Nevertheless the mind gains relief: leave me only, when all is gone, thyself, and Jesus and thy Word; then the mind remains contented and humble, and one is preserved from all vexation at the ways of God.

SCHMIEDER: On ver. 3. The prophet is here a poet, who soars by separate images easily understood to the mental vision of the inexpressible maj-

esty of the holy God in his active character of judge and deliverer. All his powerful operations in nature, the power of the sun, storm, earthquake, and flood, all the recollections of former divine judgments, he employs as insufficient images in order to indicate how everything lofty in nature, all the power of the nations, must vanish before the power of God. The impending judgment upon the empire of the Chaldæans and the deliverance of Israel from Babylon serve him only as a suggestion, in order to announce in the midst of the years of the world's course the great deeds of God, which lead in the very last time to the full revelation of God and of his kingdom.

SCHLIER: Ver. 10 ff. The head of the enemy was broken. Pharaoh and his entire host were drowned in the depths of the sea. So will it be also hereafter, when the new enemies oppress the Lord's people; their head, a second Pharaoh, shall perish with all his people; as certainly as the hand of the Lord then smote the enemy upon the head, so certainly will it happen to them on every day of affliction.

TARNOV: ver. 16 ff. The pious are terrified at God's threatenings; the wicked, on the contrary, despise them at first in proud security; but afterward, when calamity afflicts them, they entirely lose their courage and perish.

L. OSIANDER: Ver. 19. When we are assailed on all sides we find a lasting and firm consolation within, that our God, the God of our salvation, is our Saviour and Redeemer. For after reconciliation and forgiveness of sins, what harm can external attacks do to us? Comp. Is. xxxiii. 24.

THE

BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH.

EXPOUNDED

BY

PAUL KLEINERT,

PASTOR AT ST. GERTRAUD, AND PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN.

TRANSLATED AND ENLARGED

BY

CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D.,

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE IN THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT CHICAGO, ILL.

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THE PROPHECIES OF HAGGAI.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *Person of the Prophet.*

THE name *Haggai* (חַגַּי, LXX., Ἀγγαῖος, Vulg., *Aggæus*) is, in the Old Testament, borne only by our Prophet. It is usually held to mean *Festive*, from חָג, a feast, with the adjectival suffix ַי for ִי (Green, *Heb. Gram.*, § 194 b; Ewald,[1] § 164 c). Other explanations are: *My Feast; Feast of Jehovah;* but these are less tenable.[2]

All that we certainly know of the personal history of Haggai is gathered from a comparison of chaps. i. 1; ii. 1, 10, 20 of his Prophecy, with Ezra v. 1; vi. 14. These notices do not throw any light upon his private life or circumstances, but merely indicate the occasions of his official action. They inform us that he began his prophetic career in the second year of Darius Hystaspes (B. C. 520), and that his discourses bore chiefly upon the erection of the Second Temple. His recorded public addresses cover a period of about four months, during the latter half of which he enjoyed the coöperation of Zechariah (comp. Zech. i. 1). We do not even know whether he was a native of Judæa or of Babylon, whether he was born before or during the Exile. Ewald has inferred from chap. ii. 3 that he had beheld the First Temple; but this is not necessarily implied in the passage. If he was born before the Captivity he must have been at least nearly seventy years old when he entered upon his ministry.[3]

We have, in the patristic age, statements by Pseudo-Dorotheus and Pseudo-Epiphanius (each of whom composed a history of the lives of the prophets), to the effect that Haggai returned to Jerusalem along with the other exiles, being then still a young man; that he survived the completion of the Temple (B. C. 516), and was interred with priestly honors close to the burial-place of the Priests. We know of nothing to disprove these assertions; but neither have we any evidence in their favor, and so many improbable accounts of the Prophets were in circulation both among the later Jews and the early Christians, that all unsupported extra-biblical statements concerning them must be regarded with suspicion. A notion had even gained currency in the time of Jerome (who thought it necessary to disprove it) that Haggai, as well as Malachi and John the Baptist, were angels and not men. This opinion was based upon a misunderstanding of Hag. i. 13; Mal. iii. 1; Mark i. 2.

§ 2. *Occasion and Aim of the Prophecy.*

Haggai was the earliest of the Prophets of the Restoration, preceding Zechariah by about two months. At the time of his appearance, the offices of a divine messenger were greatly needed among the Jews. In order to understand their situation as clearly as possible, it will be necessary to recur to the events which marked their history immediately after their return from the Exile. During this review we shall have to bear in mind that their conduct towards God, their neglect or fulfillment of their covenant duties towards Him, mainly deter-

1 Grammatical references to this author in the present Commentary are to his *Ausführliches Lehrbuch der Hebraischen Sprache*, 8th ed., 1870. His exegetical opinions are found in his *Propheten des alten Bundes*, ii., pp. 516–522.

2 Compare the similar names in Gen. xlvi. 16; Numb. xxvi. 15.

3 See the exegesis of chap. ii. 3. Keil, in animadverting upon Ewald's supposition, asserts that Haggai must have been at that time eighty years old. But this he himself disproves by his correct observations upon the passage itself. In his *Introduction to the Old Testament* (i., p. 420, Engl. translation), he had favored the conjecture of Ewald.

mined their temporal and spiritual condition, as well as the matter and tone of the prophetic communications.

The first religious acts of the little colony promised favorably enough. After reinstituting the observance of the legal festivals in the seventh month (the month of feasts) of the first year of their return, which was also the first of the sole reign of Cyrus, they proceeded to hire workmen and purchase building material, and laid the foundation of the Second Temple in the second month of the second year, B. C. 535. But even on this joyful occasion there were indications of a feeling of despondency among those who had beheld the First Temple in its superior outward beauty (Ezra iii. 12, 13), a feeling which seems to have been soon communicated to the rest of the people, and to have contributed to that neglect of the Temple which the Prophet afterwards rebuked. The same symptom at all events reappeared even after the work of building had been more energetically resumed, for it was this that called forth his third address (chap. ii. 1–9). This point deserves attention here, for if we compare our Prophet's discourses with the Book of Ezra, we shall find that the delay in the great work was due no less to the unfaithfulness and faint-heartedness of the people than to the machinations of their enemies. It was not long before the latter cause began to operate. The Samaritans, the heathen nations (Ezra iv. 1, 9, 10), who had been planted in the deserted cities of the ten tribes by Esarhaddon, offered, immediately after the founding of the Temple, to form an alliance with them, and to assist them in their labors, on the plea that both communities worshipped the same God. This proposal having been rejected, they next employed counsellors against the Jews at the Persian court. Their intrigues, after long perseverance, seemed to be at last quite successful, when, in reply to a petition addressed by them to Pseudo-Smerdis (B. C. 522, the Artaxerxes of Ezra iv. 7), they were assured that the building of Jerusalem must be discontinued. The decree of this usurper was immediately carried into effect, and whatever efforts the Jews might be inclined to make in the way of completing the Temple were rendered impossible of execution during the remainder of his reign, which lasted less than a year. But on the accession of Darius Hystaspes (B. C. 521), who was soon found to be favorable to his Judæan subjects, the expostulations and exhortations of Haggai and Zechariah, as prophets of Jehovah, stirred them up to resume and finish the work.

In studying the disposition of the people during the interval between the founding of the Temple and their final and successful effort to complete it, and so seeking the justification of the Prophet's ministry, we can gather enough from the Biblical record to show us that they were in need of just such a method of treatment as that which he adopted towards them in his addresses. That the slow progress or the lengthened intermissions in the work were not entirely owing to the opposition of the Samaritans, is abundantly manifest. (1.) The rescript of Pseudo-Smerdis against them was not issued until thirteen years had elapsed after the foundations were laid. The mere intrigues of their enemies were sufficient to deter them from serious, persevering effort. This shows that they were by no means zealous in the cause of God and religion. (2.) The reign of that usurper lasted only a few months, and it was not until the second year of his successor, and until they were incited by stern rebuke and expostulation, that they returned to their duty, although it must have occurred to them that the policy of the former monarch would naturally be opposed by the latter. (3.) We learn from the Prophecy itself, that, during the period we are considering, many of them had been employing their superfluous means to beautify their own dwellings, while the House of God was lying desolate, thus manifesting a selfish disregard of his superior claims. (4.) The scantiness of their harvests, and the want of success that had attended their labors generally, are adduced by the Prophet as an evidence of God's displeasure, since under the theocracy, national and domestic prosperity or distress was determined by obedience or neglect of the Divine King. These calamities therefore proved them guilty of ignoring his demands, the most imperative of which at that time was the restoration of his Dwelling-place.

Such were the external circumstances which called forth the Prophet's discourses. They indicate sufficiently the immediate object of his ministry. The bearing of his prophecies upon the interests of his people and of the Church of God, can be learnt to any satisfactory extent only from their exposition. At present a few remarks, in a most general way, will be all that it will be necessary to offer.

While it is characteristic of all the Prophets of the Restoration that they are much occupied with the Temple in its relations to God's kingdom, it is the distinction of Haggai that all his discourses, even the last (chap. ii. 20–23), relate more or less directly to this subject. It is not difficult to discover the reason of this. In the first place, the Temple was the very

condition of the national existence. If the returned exiles were to be organized and to continue as a distinct people, the Temple must be restored and sacredly guarded. Other nations might exist without such a palladium; they could not. In the second place, those who were united by this common institution composed the Church of God, his covenant people. The Temple was his earthly dwelling, where in united worship they were accustomed to seek his covenanted favor and the bestowal of common blessings, the place where his Presence was specially displayed. It was therefore necessary that the earliest prophetic addresses to the little community should awaken in them a sense of the relation in which they stood to God as his subjects and chosen people, and of the obligation thereby entailed upon them to restore his neglected and desolate House. Then would He return to dwell with them (chap. i. 14). Then would they enjoy the abiding presence of his Spirit (ii. 5). Then, too, would He pour forth upon them perpetual blessings (ii. 19) instead of the merited chastisements of the past. Then would they, as the objects of his peculiar care, be preserved among the commotions which should shatter the surrounding nations (ii. 22, 23). Thus in this aspect of the Prophet's ministry its grand purpose was to subserve the progress of God's kingdom by evoking and perpetuating among his people a spirit of ready obedience and love to his ordinances. This was the part he bore in laying the foundations of the Church of the Second Temple.

But the Second Temple was viewed by the Prophet distinctively in another aspect. While inferior to the first in outward splendor it was to be the seat of a more spiritual worship, which would constitute it a more fitting representative of the Church of Christ. This relation Haggai seems to have regarded in that one of his discourses which was at once the most cheering to his cotemporaries and the most instructive to future generations (chap. ii. 1–9). There he even assumes the identity of the Second Temple and the Church of Messianic times, and describes the former as sharing in the glories of the latter. He announces that the time is not far off when the privileges of Jehovah's worship shall be extended over all the earth, and that the treasures of all nations will then be brought to adorn this Temple and to exalt its glory above the departed splendor of the former House, while peace and prosperity shall reign among the unnumbered worshippers. The divine purpose in this discourse was, on the one hand, to revive the drooping spirits of those who were engaged upon the Temple, by revealing to them the transcendent glory which should ultimately crown their work; and, on the other, to afford to the feeble and despised people of God, but lately emerged from their long captivity, a bright glimpse of the future which was in store for them, when they should embrace all the kingdoms of the earth.[1]

§ 3. *The Book of the Prophet in Matter and Form.*

The Book of the Prophet Haggai consists of five addresses delivered to the Jewish people, within a period of about four months, in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, King of Persia. The *first* discourse (chap. i. 1–11) is one of reproof, expostulation, and warning, being designed to arouse the people from their religious apathy, and, in especial, from their indifference to the condition of the Temple, which was then lying desolate. The *second* discourse (contained in the section chap. i. 12–15), after a relation of the beneficial results of the first, holds out to them, in their returning obedience, the promise of God's returning favor and of his aid in their work.[2] The *third* discourse (chap. ii. 1–9), evoked by the despon-

1 If this were the proper place for the discussion, it might be interesting to trace the relations subsisting between the several discourses of the Prophets of the Restoration, which bear upon the Temple, *e. g.*, how Haggai assumes the identity of the Second Temple and the Church of Christ, while Zechariah (vi. 12, 13) seems to contradict him by asserting that the Messiah would Himself build the Temple of Jehovah, and Malachi resolves into full harmony these seeming discords of the Prophetic lyre by predicting that Jehovah would come to his Temple, and *purify the sons of Levi* (iii. 1–3). The subject is worthy of fuller consideration.

2 Nearly all the Commentators regard chap. i. as comprising but one discourse, thus making the whole prophecy to consist of four. The following considerations will show that the passage chap. i. 12–15 should form a separate division, as containing a distinct address. (1.) Ver. 13 seems to indicate that a new message was delivered by Jehovah to Haggai (2.) As far as ver. 11 the words of the Prophet are objurgatory, thus giving a well-defined character to the discourse. His words in ver. 13 express approval and convey encouragement, they must therefore form the subject of a distinct message. The reason of the contrast is obvious. A complete change (described in ver. 12) had been effected in the disposition of the people. Before they had been apathetic and careless. But now the rebukes and denunciations of the Prophet had excited in them that true fear of God whose earliest fruit is repentance (comp. ver. 14). Hence he was commissioned to assure them of God's renewed favor. The brevity of the message as recorded, is accounted for on the assumption (probable upon all grounds) that Haggai, in accordance with the general usage of the Prophets, has given us a mere outline of his address. It is generally held that vers. 12–15 are intended merely to set forth the effects of the first message. But it is to be remembered that the aim of the Prophet was not to write history, and that when he appears to be narrating, he is simply showing the occasions of his discourses, whose delivery was the sole object of his mission.

dency that had begun to affect some of the people, on account of the outward inferiority of the present temple, predicts for it a glory far transcending that of its predecessor, since the treasures of all nations were yet to adorn the Church of the Messiah, of which it was the representative. The *fourth* discourse (chap. ii. 10–19), teaches them, from the principles of the Ceremonial Law, that no amount of outward religious observance can communicate holiness, or secure acceptance with God and the restoration of his favor, the withdrawal of which had been so manifest in their late public and private distress. The *fifth* discourse assures the struggling community of their preservation in the midst of commotions which should destroy other nations, promising to its faithful rulers, represented by Zerubbabel, the special protection of their Covenant God.

These outlines of his addresses the Prophet has arranged in regular chronological order, carefully indicating the dates of their respective delivery. They are presented in a style, which, though lacking the poetical qualities of many of the earlier prophecies, is yet marked in various passages by great vivacity and impressiveness, to which, among other characteristics, the frequent use of interrogation (*e. g.*, in chaps. i. 4, 9; ii. 3, 12, 13, 19) largely contributes. A striking peculiarity of the Prophet's style has been remarked in his habit of "uttering the main thought with concise and nervous brevity, after a long and verbose introduction" (comp. chaps. i. 2; i. 12; ii. 5; ii. 19). In addition to these more obvious characteristics, we can discern both rhetorical and grammatical peculiarities natural to the declining period of the Hebrew language and literature. Of the former class is, for example, the frequent recurrence of favorite phrases: of the latter are such anomalous constructions as are found in chaps. i. 4, 6, 8, 9; ii. 3, 15, 16, 18, to the critical discussion of which the reader is referred for fuller explanation.

§ 4. *Special Works upon Haggai or upon the Prophets of the Restoration as a whole.*

J. P. Clinton, *Comm. upon Haggai*, London, 1560; J. Pilkington, *An Exposition upon the Prophet Aggeus*, London, 1560; J. Mercerus (or Mercier), *Scholia et Versio ad Prophetiam Haggæi*, Paris, 1581; J. J. Grynæus, *Comm. in Haggæum*, Geneva, 1581 (translated into English by Chr. Featherstone, London, 1586); Fr. Baldwin, *Comm. in Hagg., Zach., et Mal.*, Wittenberg, 1610; B. Willius, *Prophetæ Hagg., Zach., Malach., Commentario Illustrati*, Bremen, 1638; Aug. Varenius, *Trifolium Propheticum, seu Tres Posteriores Prophetæ, scil. Hagg. Zach., et Mal., Explicati*, Rostock, 1662, and *Exercitationes Duæ in Proph. Hagg.*, Rostock, 1648; Andr. Reinbeck, *Exercitationes in Proph. Hagg.*, Brunswick, 1692; Dan. Pfeffinger, *Notæ in Proph. Hagg.*, Strassburg, 1703; Francis Woken, *Annotationes Exegeticæ in Proph. Hagg.*, Leipzig, 1719; J. G. Scheibel, *Observationes Criticæ et Exegeticæ ad Vaticinia Haggæi cum Prologomenis*, Wratislaw, 1822; T. V. Moore, *The Prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, a New Translation, with Notes*, New York, 1856; Aug. Köhler, *Die Weissagungen Haggai's erklärt*, Erlangen, 1860. W. Pressel, *Commentar zu den Schriften der Propheten Haggai, Sacharja und Malachi*, Gotha, 1870.

For Commentaries upon the Minor Prophets which include Haggai, see the General Introduction to this volume.

The Messianic passage in Haggai (chap. ii. 6–9) is discussed by the following writers: Wm. Harris, *Discourses on the Principal Representations of the Messiah in the Old Testament*, Lond., 1724; Bp. Chandler, *Defence of Christianity, from the Prophecies of the Old Test.*, Lond., 1725, pp. 71–84; J. H. Verschuir, *In Hagg. ii.* 6–9, Franecker, 1760, reprinted in his *Dissertationes Philol.-exeget.*, 1773; Deyling, *Observationes Sacræ*, Part iii. § 18: *Gloria Templi Posterioris;* Hengstenberg, *Christology*, iii., pp. 265–295 (2d ed. Engl. Transl.); Hofmann, *Weissagung und Erfüllung*, vol. i., pp. 330 ff.; Tholuck, *Die Propheten und ihre Weissagungen*, p. 156; J. P. Smith, *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah* (5th ed.), i., pp. 283 ff.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET HAGGAI.

FIRST ADDRESS.

Rebuke and Expostulation of the People for their Neglect of the Temple.

Chapter I. 1–11.

1 In the second year of Darius[1] the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of
the month, there was a word of Jehovah, by the hand of Haggai the Prophet, to
Zerubbabel,[2] son of Shealtiel, governor[3] of Judah, and to Joshua, son of Josadak,
2 the High Priest, saying: Thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts, saying: This people
3 say, It is not the time to come,[4] the time for the House of Jehovah to be built. And
4 a word of Jehovah was by the hand of Haggai the Prophet, saying: Is it the time
for you yourselves[5] to dwell in wainscoted[6] houses, and this House lying waste?
5, 6 But come! saith Jehovah of Hosts, set your heart upon your ways. Ye have
been sowing much and bringing in little; eating, and it was not to satisfaction;
drinking, and it was not to fullness;[7] clothing yourselves, and it was not to any
one's being warm;[8] and he who has been earning wages has been earning them into
7, 8 a torn purse.[9] Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, Set your heart upon your ways. Go
up to the mountain and bring wood and build the House, and I will take pleasure in
9 it, and will be honored,[10] saith Jehovah. Ye have kept looking for much,[11] and lo
(it came) to little![12] and ye brought it home and I blew upon it. Because of what?[13]
saith Jehovah. Because of my House which is desolate, while ye are running each
10 to his own house. Therefore above you have the heavens restrained themselves
11 from dew, and the earth has restrained her increase. And I invoked desolation
upon the earth and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new-made wine, and upon the oil, and upon all that the soil produces, and upon man and upon beast, and upon all the labor of (men's) hands.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — לְדָרְיָוֶשׁ. Some MSS. of Hagg., Zech., Dan., and Ezra read דָּרְיָוֶשׁ (Doryavesh), and others, דָּרְיָוֶשׁ. The correctness of the common reading is established by the forms *Dàryavush* and *Dàrayavush*, found in the Cuneiform Inscriptions. The name is usually held to be derived from the Zendic *dar*, to preserve, Sanskrit *dhar*, the normal and root form of the verb *dhri*. The explanation of Herodotus (vi. 98), ἐρξείης, *coercitor*, *conservator*, is therefore probably correct.

2 Ver. 1. — זְרֻבָּבֶל is a name derived from זְרוּי and בָּבֶל (Dispersed to Babylon), or from זְרוּעַ and בָּבֶל (Begotten in Babylon). As Zerubbabel was probably born during the Exile, it is impossible to determine which is the correct explanation. Either etymology would of course account for the doubling of the first Beth. Ayin is dropped in the name שְׁמוּאֵל, from שְׁמוּעַ and אֵל.

3 Ver. 1. — פַּחַת. The derivation of this word cannot be said to be yet settled. The commonly received etymology (suggested by Benfey) from the Sanskrit *paksha*, a companion (of the king), from which the modern term *pasha* is also supposed to be derived, is disputed by Spiegel, chiefly on the ground that the word is not found in the Eranian languages. He proposes to derive from the form *pâvan*, from *pà*, to defend, which occurs in Zend and Sanskrit at the end of compounds (e. g., *khsatrapâvan*, satrap, a defender of the kingdom), and in the *Avesta* as a separate word in the contracted form *pavan*. He then conjectures a dialectic variation, *pagvan*, to account more naturally for our word.

4 Ver. 2. — לֹא עֶת־בֹּא. The only plausible defense for reading בָּא, and rendering: the time has not come, as all the ancient translators have done, as well as most of the English and early Continental expositors, is that according to the received reading the infinitive would be written defectively. This, however, is quite common (comp. Ex. ii. 18; Lev. xiv. 48; Num. xxxii. 9; 1 Kings xiv. 28; Is. xx. 1). Moore and Henderson retain the inf. and yet give the above translation. This can be assumed as correct only on the supposition that the inf. is used absolutely as equivalent to a

finite verb. The position, however, that such a construction can be adopted when no finite verb precedes in the sentence, is very precarious, really resting only upon Ezek. i. 14 (comp. Green, *Heb. Gr.*, § 268, 1 *a*, and Ewald, § 280 *a*). But there is not the least necessity of resorting to it; for the translation here adopted, and held by most of the recent German expositors, is quite natural and agreeable to the context. For the construction of the last clause of the verse, see Green, § 267 *b*; Ewald, § 237 *c*.

5 Ver. 4. — אַתֶּם. On this emphatic repetition of the pers. pronoun, see Ewald, § 105 *f*., and comp. Jer. ii. 31.

6 Ver. 4. — סְפוּנִים. This is one of the rare cases in which an adjective qualifying a definite substantive is without the article.

7 Ver. 6. — The absol. inf. being properly a verbal noun, הָבֵא, אָכוֹל, etc., depend upon זְרַעְתֶּם, and are determined in sense by it; see Green, § 268, 1. The literal translation therefore is: Ye have sown much, and (there was) a bringing in of little, etc.

8 Ver. 6. — The impersonal force of the absol. inf. above suggested by the employment in the last clause but one of לוֹ instead of לָכֶם, which would be naturally expected; literally: there was a clothing (of one's self), and it was not for a warming to him.

9 Ver. 6. — In the last clause we have a pregnant construction: earns wages (and puts them) into a purse with holes.

10 Ver. 8. — The keri is וְאִכָּבְדָה, which is also found in some MSS in Kennicott. The He paragogic in the "voluntative" future occurs regularly in sentences denoting a consequence (Ewald, § 347 *a*.). But it is sometimes absent (comp. Zech. i. 3 with Mal. iii. 7). Its omission in וְאֶרְצֶה decides nothing, since it is appended but very rarely to לה verbs (Green, § 172, 3; Ewald, § 228 *c*.). The letter ה representing the number five, its omission here has been regarded by later Talmudists as betokening that the Second Temple was deprived of the five following things: (1) The Ark of the Covenant with the Mercy Seat and the Cherubim; (2) The Sacred Fire; (3) The Shekinah; (4) The Holy Spirit: (5) The Urim and Thummim.

11 Ver. 9. — פָּנֹה. The inf. abs. occurs here without any finite verb preceding, unlike the construction in ver. 6. See the grammatical remarks upon that verse. It is therefore strictly a verbal noun: (there was) a looking for much, etc. Such a mode of expression often indicates a certain degree of emotion, "after the utterance of which the ordinary manner of speaking is easily resumed" (Ewald, § 328 *b*). Accordingly a finite verb, הֲבֵאתֶם, is found in the next clause.

12 Ver. 9. — Before לִמְעָט some such verb as הָיָה is to be understood: (it came) to little.

13 Ver. 9. — יַעַן מֶה. This is one of the numerous cases cited by Ewald (§ 182 *b*), in which מֶה occurs for מָה without any assignable cause. Köhler suggests that the analogy of בַּמֶּה, כַּמֶּה, עַד מֶה might possibly explain the change as being occasioned by a preceding preposition. The laws of Hebrew vocalization are, however, determined by the form and not by the meaning of words, and the existence of such anomalies as מֶה קוֹל (1 Sam. iv. 14), מֶה מִשְׁפַּט (2 Kings ii 7), would seem to show that further investigation would be hopeless.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **In the second year of Darius the King, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month.** The dates affixed to the prophecies generally contemplate the perpetuation of the several books and the requirements of readers in all succeeding time. Haggai indicates with special care the precise date of the delivery of each of his messages. In accordance with the practice necessarily adopted by the Old Testament writers after the people of God were subjected by heathen powers, the year of his prophecies is reckoned from the accession of the king to whom the Jews were then subject. The Darius here mentioned is Darius Hystaspes, who ascended the throne of Persia B. C. 521, and whose treatment of his Jewish subjects is recorded in Ezra iv. 24–vi. 22. That it could not have been Darius Nothus (B. C. 423), as J. J. Scaliger and a few others have maintained, appears plainly from ch. ii. 3, where our Prophet, according to the only natural interpretation of the verse, addresses those who had beheld the First Temple, which was destroyed B. C. 588. The month is named according to the sacred order in the Jewish year (comp. Zech. i. 7; vii. 1; viii. 19). The sixth month is Elul, answering nearly to our September, or, more strictly, extending from the sixth to the seventh new moon of the year. The first day of the month was specially suitable for the delivery of the Prophet's message, as being the feast-day of the New Moon, when he would be more likely to attract attention (Hengstenberg). **There was a word of the Lord by the hand of Haggai the Prophet.** The "word of the Lord," as always in the Prophets, indicates a freedom from all human admixture; while the expression, בְּיַד, intimates that the Prophet himself was merely a medium of communication, the word simply passing through his hands. On the name and person of the Prophet see Introd. § 1. **To Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, Governor of Judah, and to Joshua, son of Josadak, the High Priest.** Zerubbabel is called in Ezra i. 8; v. 14 by his Persian name Sheshbazzar (of uncertain origin). In 1 Chron. iii. 17, Shealtiel appears as a son of Assir and grandson of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin). According to 1 Chron. iii. 19, Zerubbabel was a son of Pedaiah, a brother of Shealtiel. According to Luke iii. 27, Shealtiel was a son of Neri, a descendant of David through his son Nathan. The best method of harmonizing these statements is that adopted by Koehler and Keil. The latter says: "These three divergent accounts may be brought into agreement by means of the following combinations, if we keep in mind the prophecy of Jeremiah (xxii. 30), that Jeconiah would be childless and not be blessed with seeing one of his seed sitting upon the throne of David and ruling over Judah. This prophecy was fulfilled according to Luke's genealogical table, inasmuch as Shealtiel's father there is not Assir or Jeconiah, a descendant of David in the line of Solomon, but Neri, a descendant of David's son Nathan. It follows there-

fore that neither of the sons of Jeconiah mentioned in 1 Chron. iii. 17, 18 (Zedekiah and Assir), had a son, but that the latter had only a daughter, who married a man of the family of her father's tribe, according to the law of heiresses (Num. xxvii. 8; xxxvi. 8, 9), namely, Neri, who belonged to the tribe of Judah and the family of David. From this marriage sprang Shealtiel, Malkiram, Pedaiah, and others. The eldest of these took possession of the property of his maternal grandfather, and was regarded legally as his son. Hence he is described in 1 Chron. iii. 17 as the son of Assir the son of Jeconiah, whereas in Luke he is regarded, according to his lineal descent, as the son of Neri. But Shealtiel also appears to have died without posterity, and to have left only a widow, which necessitated a Levirate marriage on the part of one of the brothers (Deut. xxv. 5, 10; Matt. xxii. 24, 28). Shealtiel's second brother Pedaiah appears to have performed this duty, to have begotten Zerubbabel and Shimei by this sister-in-law (1 Chron. iii. 19), the former of whom, Zerubbabel, was entered in the family register of the deceased uncle Shealtiel, passing as his (legal) son and heir, and continuing his family." פֶּחָה ("governor") is a general term for a civil and military ruler of a division of a kingdom, applied at first to those of the Persian monarchy, and extended to those of others in writings of the later period (1 Kings x. 15). It was applied both to satraps, as Tatnai (Ezra v. 3), and to inferior governors, as Zerubbabel. Joshua is the same person so frequently mentioned in the Book of Zechariah, upon whom the high distinction was conferred of representing the Messiah as the future Prince and Priest of Israel, in the symbolical transaction recorded in Zech. iii. It is in accordance with this typical function that Joshua is addressed here along with Zerubbabel, not merely as the highest representative of the sacred priestly office, but also, to a certain extent, as ruling the people jointly with the civil governor. Such authority was gradually more and more assumed by the High Priests after the dissolution of the kingdom until the tendency culminated in the Maccabæan princes, who formally united the two functions in one person. It was, therefore, as the leaders of the people civil and ecclesiastical, that Zerubbabel and Joshua were appealed to. "Upon them the responsibility is laid if the work enjoined by Jehovah is not accomplished" (Koehler).

Ver. 2. **Thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts.** This venerable formula is employed uniformly by our Prophet to introduce his messages. **This people say.** There is no ground for assuming, as many have done, that the word this is here used in a contemptuous manner, like *οὗτος* and *iste*. There is, however, a significance in the choice of the word. The Jews are not called "Israel" or "My people," but by an attributive which denotes indifference, and thus indicates the divine displeasure against them. **It is not the time to come.** That this is the correct translation, is proved in the grammatical note upon this verse. The second clause: **time for the House of Jehovah to be built**, is both explanatory of the first and parallel to it throughout in thought and construction. "Coming" means preparing to build the Temple, as the separate stages of preparation and erection are distinguished also in ver. 14. So most of the recent German expositors, after Osiander, Junius, Tremellius, and Cocceius. The people had probably been urging as an excuse for their inactivity that their relations with Persia were not favorable to a resumption of work upon the Temple. But this was a mere pretext; for they had made no effort to discover whether the new and legitimate king Darius Hystaspes would not regard them with favor. Their inaction was not the compulsory and painful restraint of zealous patriots and ardent worshippers, but the easy and selfish indifference of an ungrateful and unfaithful people. See a fuller estimate of their disposition at this time in the Introduction, § 2.

Vers. 3, 4. **And a word of Jehovah . . . . And this House lying desolate.** The disingenuousness of their plea is self-evident, and is therefore simply assumed in the following discourse, the design of which is to awaken in them a sense of their ingratitude to God. It is represented to them most impressively, with an allusion to the very language of their pretext, that while they held their own wants and even their luxuries to be matters of pressing moment, they thought any time suitable to attend to the claims of their God; that while their own homes had been regained, there was yet no habitation for the God of Israel; that while their wealthy members were using their superfluous means to adorn and beautify their dwellings, God's dwelling-place still lay desolate, appealing in vain to their piety and patriotism, which had been overborne by selfishness and supineness. The allusion, moreover, could not fail to expose the insincerity of their excuses. Houses wainscoted with cedar were the residence of kings (1 Kings vii. 7; Jer. xxii. 14), and if some of them had now the command of such resources as enabled them to live in princely splendor, they might surely have reserved a portion for the requirements of the Temple, when the work of building it should be resumed, — if that work had been giving them the least concern. The personal pronoun is repeated — **you yourselves** — for the sake of emphasis, in order to make more prominent the antithesis between them and Jehovah. See Grammatical note.

Ver. 5. **Set your heart upon your ways.** This expression, so frequent in our Prophet (i. 7; ii. 15, 18), is equivalent to: consider your ways. As the next verse shows, the people were bidden to contemplate the results of their late course. In these, as displaying the operation of the principles of God's moral and theocratical government, they might discern evidences of a disregard of his plainly revealed will. They were to infer the nature of their conduct from its results.

Ver. 6. **Ye have been sowing much — into a torn purse.** On the peculiar constructions in this verse see the grammatical note. The consequences of the people's "ways" are now specified as they appeared in the unproductiveness of their fields and the unprofitableness of their labor generally. The various expressions are intended to form one general picture, and to set forth in language partly literal and partly figurative, that not only was their labor to a very large extent profitless, but that even what their fields and their manual toil did produce gave them but little enjoyment. The latter result did certainly happen, and was due, moreover, to the withdrawal of God's blessings, as appears plainly from ver. 9. But to assume that all the expressions are to be taken in their unqualified literalness, as Calvin, Osiander, Koehler, and Keil seem to have done, must be regarded as an unwarranted as well as unnecessary interpretation. If we compare the prediction of a similar condition of things in Lev. xxvi. 26 (see on ver. 5), we

find that the words: ye shall eat and shall not be satisfied, imply, as shown by the context, that the hunger threatened in case of disobedience would result simply from the scarcity of food. It is natural to suppose that similar circumstances are described here by the like expressions. But to hold generally that the hunger and thirst and cold were not in any degree removed by food, and drink, and clothing, would be to postulate a miracle quite without necessity. הָבֵא, to bring in, is the term proper to harvesting (comp. 2 Sam. ix. 10, and the figurative use of the word in Ps. xc. 12). The last clause, in a striking figure, illustrates the inadequacy of the remuneration for labor, from which we may infer that business generally was almost prostrated.

This verse and vers. 9–11 are not at all inconsistent with ver. 4. There the rebuke is directed against the wealthier members, as before indicated. They, having probably become possessed of some property in Babylon, and having prospered during the first few years of their Jewish residence, still lived in comparative prosperity, and were therefore in a position to give of their means and time to the work they had neglected. The mass of the people, however, though presumably also prosperous at first, were now suffering from those temporal inflictions visited upon them by God on account of their neglect of their paramount duty to Him, which would soon involve the entire community, rich and poor, in complete destitution, unless they aroused themselves from their sinful indifference.

Ver. 7. The admonition of ver. 5 is repeated here, both as betokening greater urgency, and also for the purpose of reinforcing the argument of vers. 5, 6, by showing to what course a conscientious review of their conduct should determine them. They should be impelled, as is next shown, to make immediate preparations for the complete restoration of the Temple.

Ver. 8. **Go up to the mountain and bring wood, and build the House.** It is somewhat difficult to determine the precise application of הָהָר in this passage. Leaving out of view the altogether improbable notion of Grotius, Rosenmüller, and Newcome, that it refers to Mount Moriah itself, on which the Temple stood, we find that while perhaps the majority of modern expositors (*e. g.* J. D. Michaelis, Maurer, Keil, Moore, Fausset) regard it as a collective expression for the hilly parts of Palestine generally, in accordance with Neh. viii. 15; Josh. ix. 1; xi. 2, 32, many others (*e. g.*, Cocceius, Ewald, Henderson) limit its application to Mount Lebanon. It is most probable that no definite mountain was thought of, the command not restricting the sphere of operation even to Palestine itself, but urging the people in general terms to seek building material in those districts in which it could best be obtained. It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that it was upon the high lands of the country that the most suitable timber grew. As there is no command with reference to stone for the walls, the building of which had already begun (ch. ii. 18; Ezra iii. 10; v. 16), it is plain that "wood" is put here for building material generally. **And I will take pleasure in it and will be honored.** Koehler and Keil translate reflexively: will glorify myself, that is, upon the people by blessing them. But this sense is not obvious. It is best, with Maurer, Moore, and others, to take the word in its primary application. See Textual note.

Vers. 9–11. The exhortation of the last verse is now reinforced by a more fresh and elaborate presentation of those disastrous consequences of disobedience which had been urged in ver. 6. The connection with ver. 8 may be easily perceived. Jehovah had there promised to manifest his approbation if the people would return to their duty. The certainty of this must be evident to them; for was not their domestic distress a consequence of their neglect of his claims upon their service? The relation of these verses to all of the discourse that precedes, becomes clearer when we perceive that the whole passage, vers. 5–11, is intended to force upon the minds of the people the consideration that ruin is awaiting them, unless they proceed at once with the rebuilding of the Temple. The command in ver. 8 therefore, though expressing the practical conclusion to which the whole message tends, is not the leading sentence in the discourse, but is introduced as subsidiary to the main argument. Ver. 5, and again ver. 7, exhort the people to consider their ways. Ver. 8 shows the joyful consequences of obedience. Vers. 9–11 suggest, by depicting the baleful results of past disobedience, the evils which the continuance of such a course would entail.

Ver. 9. **Ye looked for much — every man to his own house.** On the construction, see Grammatical note. The literal translation of the first clause would be: ye turned towards much (Ex. xvi. 10). The allusion is to a frequent inspection of the growing crops. **I blew upon it,** for the purpose of scattering and dissipating it. The small quantity that was gathered profited but little, on account of the absence of God's blessing, according to the general notion conveyed by ver. 6. See the remarks upon that verse. **Why? saith Jehovah of Hosts.** Though the present condition of things could very well have been accounted for by the people themselves, Jehovah condescends to explain it to them. He Himself asks the cause, and gives the solution to which the whole of the discourse had been leading, — that while their own affairs had been absorbing their thoughts, his claims had been disregarded. **Because of my house which is desolate, and ye are running every man to his own house.** As in ver. 4, the different feelings with which the people were regarding God's House and their own houses, are sharply contrasted, but here the latter do not seem to be limited in application to the dwellings themselves, the word "house" being probably employed as the centre of that activity which they all manifested in their haste to attend to their own concerns.

Ver. 10. We concur with Keil in the opinion that it is impossible to determine whether עֲלֵיכֶם is to be translated: above you, or: on your account. We incline rather to the former view, though it is stoutly opposed by Hitzig, Henderson, and others. A difficulty likewise meets us in the rest of the clause. כָּלְאָ, in the second member of the verse, is transitive, with a direct object. If transitive here also, we expect an object expressed or understood; but Köhler and Keil, who deny an intransitive or reflexive sense, do not inform us what that object is; for they maintain rightly that מִטָּל is privative (from dew), and in fact use in an intransitive sense the verb which they employ in their translation (*darum haben über euch die Himmel zurückgehalten dass kein Thau fiel*). If מִטָּל is privative, the reflexive sense would seem

to be unavoidable. Ewald, Umbreit, Henderson, take that word as the object, and that in a partitive sense: has restrained of her dew, a rendering which Köhler rightly condemns as too prosaic.

Ver. 11. **And I invoked desolation — upon all the labor of (men's) hands.** This verse still depends upon the "therefore" of ver. 10, completing the picture of misfortune and threatening ruin evoked by the unfaithfulness of the people. We translate חֹרֶב *desolation,* because it is the only word which will apply to all the objects cited in the verse. The phrase has moreover been chosen designedly by the Prophet to indicate both the justice and the fitness of the retribution. They allowed *God's* House to lie "desolate" (vers. 4, 9). Disaster and failure had already visited their fields and the labor of their hands, and very soon, if they should remain unmoved in their guilty indifference, the blighting curse invoked by their offended God would fall upon them in its unrestrained severity, when they should realize the full meaning of that sentence afterwards pronounced upon their obdurate and ungrateful descendants: Behold *your* house is left unto you desolate.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The two great objects of the institution of Prophecy were to direct the inner life of God's people into harmony with the commands and the spirit of the Law, and to point forward to Him who was to fulfill both the Law and the Prophets. Our Prophet, as we shall see, represented both of these functions. In this chapter he is concerned with the religious condition of the people as expressed by their attitude towards God's true worship. Their persistent disregard of the claims of their Deliverer and King indicated plainly a growing estrangement and disloyalty of heart. They could only be recalled to devotion and duty through a message of rebuke and warning from God through an inspired and chosen messenger (comp. ver. 13). And such utterances were naturally directed against the most patent and flagrant violation of their religious duty, — their neglect of the House of God. The Temple, as the centre of the Jewish worship, the place where Jehovah's presence was manifested, where national and individual sins might be covered over, and where the favor of God might be invoked upon his people, was indispensable to the very life of the nation as a people of God. To neglect it was to commit treason against Him, to reject Him as their God and King, and to invite his rejection of them.

2. Such indifference to the demands of God upon the service of his people was necessarily followed by his estrangement from them. For, as the worship in the Temple secured their admission into the very presence of God, it was both in type and reality a meeting not simply of reconciliation but of cordial friendship, a renewed ratification of the Covenant (comp. Rev. xxi. 3). As loving God's House and being devoted to its service, could He fittingly call them "My People:" and it seems no less fitting and necessary that indifference on their part to the enjoyment of his favor and confidence should alienate his regard, that tenderness in Him should become aversion, that the Israel of God should be coldly recognized as "this people."

3. But other and more palpable consequences must follow such a course of conduct on the part of God's people. It was a warning repeatedly urged upon them by Moses in the illustration of that Law which was to be the guide of their national and individual life; it was a lesson impressed upon them by many a hard experience of public and private distress and calamity, culminating in that long captivity from which they had so lately emerged, that the loss of God's favor involves not merely religious and moral deterioration, but the withdrawal of that providential care which secures a due return to labor, with fruitful seasons and bounteous harvests, and even follows men to their homes, leading every act and thought to enjoyment and happiness. Deprived of such care, they, in all their pursuits, might look and look again for much, but they would surely bring in little.

4. Such dealings on the part of God towards his people, while setting forth clearly the doctrine of retribution (De Wette), are not simply punitive: they are also corrective and remedial in design and tendency. Otherwise prophecy would be nothing but the repeated announcement of an impending doom. Otherwise there would be no meaning in the message of our Prophet, who, while holding out to his people no other prospect than that of distress and desolation as the result of continued disobedience, presents also the inspiring and quickening vision of their God and King restored by their obedience to the dwelling-place which they are urged to prepare for Him, and looking forth upon them thence in favor and love (ver. 8). In this he is the prophet, not of his faithless countrymen alone, but also of a God-despising yet not God abandoned world: he still calls out to men on behalf of God: Consider your ways.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 2–4. ("This people" instead of "My people"): The loss of God's confidence: (1) Its occasions; (2) Its consequences; (3) Its retrieval. — There is a time for everything with men; but they should consider, (1) Who it is that claims their first and most devoted service; (2) the means and methods of serving Him best.

CALVIN: Men are very ingenious, when they wish to hide their delinquencies.

MATTHEW HENRY: There is an aptness in us to misinterpret providential discouragements in our duty, as if they amounted to a discharge from our duty, when they are only intended for the trial and exercise of our courage and faith. It is bad to neglect our duty; but it is worse to vouch Providence for the patronizing of our neglects.

CRAMER: There are many men, who have a plenty of money when they are going to build houses for themselves, but a great scarcity of it when any is wanted for churches, or schools, or anything else to promote God's glory.

MOORE: The carved ceilings and costly ornaments will have a tongue in the day of judgment.

Vers. 5, 6. In considering our ways, we should seek to discover, (1) the motives that have urged us; (2) whither our present ways would lead us at the end of our earthly course.

GERLACH: Fruitfulness or sterility comes from God, not from blind and powerless Nature. This is the teaching of the Scriptures from Paradise and the Fall to its close.

MOORE: A careful pondering of God's dealings with us will often indicate to us God's will regarding us.

Ver. 8. God will not come to bless us as an uninvited Guest. His favor will be displayed towards

us only when we have prepared Him a temple in our hearts.

Vers. 9–11. Inflictions of suffering by God in his providence are always charged with a salutary lesson: they are a warning to his despisers, and a correction to his children.

Faussett: The very evils which men think to escape by neglecting God's ordinances, they actually bring on themselves by such unbelieving neglect.

SECOND ADDRESS.

On the Repentance of the People, God's Presence among Them is promised.

Chapter I. 12–15.

12 And Zerubbabel, son of Shaltiel,[1] and Joshua, son of Josadak, the High Priest,
and all the rest of the people, listened to the voice of Jehovah their God, and to
the words of Haggai the Prophet, according as Jehovah their God had sent him;
13 and the people feared before Jehovah. Then Haggai the Prophet of Jehovah
spoke to the people on the mission of Jehovah, saying: I am with you, saith Jeho-
14 vah. And Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, son of Shaltiel, Governor
of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, son of Josadak, the High Priest, and the spirit
of all the rest of the people, and they came and worked upon the House of Jehovah
15 of Hosts their God, On the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second
year of Darius the King.[2]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 12.—שְׁלְתִּיאֵל. The first א is dropped here, as in ver. 14 and ch. ii. 2; see Green, § 53, 3 *a*.

2 Ver. 15.—Some MSS. and editions transfer this verse to the beginning of next chapter. The ordinary division is shown to be correct by the disagreement of dates in successive verses, which the other arrangement would involve.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The effect of the Prophet's words upon the people was powerful and abiding, and upon the very first indication of a change in their disposition, he is commissioned to tell them that God's favor had already returned, and that He would assist them in their labors. The work is then speedily recommenced under the influence of that new zeal with which Jehovah inspires both leaders and people.

Ver. 12. The dispute among the expositors as to whether שְׁאֵרִית הָעָם means: the remnant of the people, those left from the Captivity, or: the rest of the people, would seem to be needless, as it is only those who listened to the Prophet's discourses that are described here, and they were assuredly not "all the remnant" of the people. It is true that the address had been delivered on a feast day; but from the religious character of the community at that time, we can hardly suppose that it had assembled in a body to worship. Nor can it be a later occasion that is alluded to, when they might be fully represented. In that case we would have to take יִשְׁמַע as meaning that they obeyed the voice of the Lord. Their obedience is not exhibited before vers. 14, 15, and what the present verse must mean is, that they were listening to the words above recorded. **The words of Haggai the Prophet** are, doubtless, not an additional discourse of Haggai unrecorded; they explain, by hendiadys, **the voice of Jehovah their God**, the message just delivered. It is unnecessary, with Koehler, Keil, *et al.*, to render עַל דִּבְרֵי, according to. It is in fact questionable whether בְּ and עַל indicate any difference in the application of שָׁמַע. In 2 Kings xx. 13; Jer. xxiii. 16, עַל is used with this verb in the sense of listening to. כַּאֲשֶׁר has here chiefly a causal sense. They discerned in the words of Haggai, the voice of God, and they listened to his address *because* he attested himself to be God's messenger. **And the people feared before Jehovah.** This clause indicates one of the causes of the rapt attention of the people, as well as its most important result.

Ver. 13. **I am with you, saith Jehovah.** This brief message,[1] delivered at this crisis, is one of great significance in the experience of the people as reflected in the discourses of the Prophet. The fact that God could now promise his presence and assistance is proof that their fear before Him was followed by sincere repentance. In their ultimate significance the words themselves contain the only explanation of the immediate revival of the community, political and religious.

1 The phrase "messenger of Jehovah" is not applied to prophets exclusively; see Mal. ii. 7, where it is employed of the priests. It was a term more appropriate to the province of the former, but, especially in later times when prophecy was retiring more into the background, its functions were often naturally transferred in some measure to the former, who thus became *teachers* of the people. Comp. Hävernick, *Einleitung*, § 196.

Vers. 14, 15. The promised presence and assistance of God, immediately vouchsafed, were manifested in the rekindled ardor of the discouraged leaders, who, with the repentant people, were now animated to engage with cheerful alacrity in the work to which they were summoned. After about three weeks spent in preparing material sufficient to justify the inception of the work, the walls of the Second Temple began again to rise from the foundations which had been laid fifteen years before by the same people.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

It is a decisive moment in the life of an individual or of a people when they are addressed with words of solemn warning, and discern therein the voice of God. On submission or indifference to those words is suspended their weal or woe, their glory or ruin. Let them but listen with that saving fear (יִרְאָה, ver. 12) which is not hopeless terror, but in reality the birth-throes of a new and living hope, and Jehovah of Hosts Himself comes to be with them; and that not only for inspiration but also for help; the one being the condition of all noble exertion, the other the sure pledge of its triumph.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 12. Successful preachers need not ascribe to themselves the merit of the results of their labors. It is the voice of God which makes their hearers listen. — Whom God would make strong for his service He first subdues to his fear.

Vers. 13, 14. The presence of God in our labors: (1) The conditions on which it may be secured; (2) Its influences upon our souls; (3) Its consequences in our achievements.

Burck: "I am with you:" here all former threatening is recalled, and all former disobedience forgiven: When God, the Prime Mover, moves the heart, then the work moves forward.

Matthew Henry: When God has work to do, He will either find or make men fit to do it, and stir them up to it. Those that have lost time have need to redeem time.

Moore: God is waiting to be gracious, and will meet the returning wanderer, even before his hand has begun the work of his service.

THIRD ADDRESS.

The Glory of the Second Temple.

Chapter II. 1–9.

1 In the seventh (month), and the twenty-first (day) of the month there was a
2 word of Jehovah by the hand of Haggai the Prophet, saying: Speak, now, to
Zerubbabel, son of Shaltiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, son of Jozadak, the
3 high priest, and to the rest of the people, saying: Who among you is left[1] that has
seen this house in its former glory? And what are seeing it (to be) now? Is not
4 such[2] (a one) as it like nothing in your eyes? But come! be strong, Zerubbabel,
saith Jehovah; and be strong Joshua, son of Jozadak, high priest; and be strong,
all the people of the land, saith Jehovah; for I am with you, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
5 With the word[3] which I covenanted with you when you were coming out of Egypt;
6 and my Spirit is abiding in your midst; fear not. For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Once more[4] — it is a little while — and I will be shaking the heavens and the earth,
7 and the sea and the dry land. And I will shake[5] all the Gentiles; and the treasures
of all the Gentiles shall come; and I shall fill this house with glory, saith Jeho-
8 vah of Hosts. The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of Hosts.
9 The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of
Hosts; and in this house I will give peace, saith Jehovah of Hosts.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 3. — הַנִּשְׁאָר. The article is employed here (= who is *the* one that is left) because the predicate is made definite by the description which follows (that has beheld this House, etc.); comp. Jer. xlix. 36, and see Green, § 245, 2, Ewald, § 277 *a*.

2 Ver. 3. — מָה (= *qualem*) agrees with אֹתוֹ as the attributive of the object, Ewald, § 325 *a*, *ad finem*. This use of מָה (as suggesting the character of the object) seems to justify the explanation of כָּמֹהוּ כְּאַיִן after the analogy of Joel ii. 2: Is not such (a one) as it as nothing in your eyes? See Ewald, § 105 *b*, 1. So Rückert, Maurer, Hitzig, Moore. To this Koehler, and after him Keil, object that then it would not be the Temple, but something like it that is compared to nothing, which would be very tame. But every one knows that in expressions of this kind "such" refers to the subject of discourse with an allusion at the same time to its character. Here כָּמֹהוּ (= a temple like this) would naturally refer back to מָה (= what sort of Temple?). Hence we prefer this view to the one more com-

monly entertained, and upheld by these critics, that we have here an inversion of the usual order of the particles of comparison: Is not as nothing so it? = Is it not as nothing; comp. Gen. xviii. 25; xliv. 18 (as Pharaoh so thou). The rendering adopted by Rosenmuller, Eichhorn, *et al.*, as well as by E. V. and most English expositors, is indefensible.

3 Ver. 5. — **אֶת־הַדָּבָר. See the exegesis, which involves in this passage so much grammatical discussion that we remit the latter to that section.**

4 Ver. 6. — **The reasons decisive against the opinion that אַחַת is joined as a numeral adjective to מְעַט are (1) that the latter is never feminine, and (2) that in such a construction the numeral always follows the substantive. See the exegesis, where other grammatical difficulties connected with the passage are discussed.**

5 Ver. 7. — **The perfects in this verse have the force of the future perfect and not of the prophetic perfect: I shall have shaken, etc. So in ver. 22.**

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The rebukes and warnings and encouragements of the Prophet having thus exerted their due influence, it might seem as if no further message were needed. But a new danger soon threatened to retard the progress of the work, a manifestation of despondency on the part of some of the people. It was natural that those of them who had beheld the first Temple in its magnificent beauty, would feel somewhat dispirited at the sight of the new structure, so inferior in outward attractions, and awakening so many suggestions of national decline and calamity, and that their feelings of dejection would soon spread through a large part of the community. These symptoms, on their very first appearance, called forth the third address of the Prophet, which, however it may be interpreted in detail, must be admitted to be a noble product of the genuine prophetic spirit, and of the highest significance in that period of their history on which the people were now entering. We may consider it in three aspects according to its three leading ideas: (1) as adapted to encourage the people in their present dejection; (2) as suggesting those characteristics, religious and moral, of the new era, which would prove it superior to any former period of Israel's history; (3) as predicting the glory of the universal Church of God, represented by the second Temple. How these ideas are contained in the address will appear in the course of the exposition.

Vers. 1, 2. Comparing the date with the time in which the work began (i. 15), it will be seen that more than three weeks had elapsed, during which the enthusiasm of the less ardent of the builders would have begun to flag. To this change of feeling, a circumstance would contribute which was noticed by Cocceius, that the 21st day of the seventh month was the seventh and last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, on which occasion, as it was the close of the ingathering, thanks were to be rendered for bountiful harvests. A certain degree of despondency would be excited by the recollection that the harvest of the present year had been so scanty (ch. ii. 9–11). Hence there was all the more urgent occasion for some word of comfort and cheer. We must remember that such a state of feeling would be quite unlike that posture maintained by the people, which had evoked the first discourse. Then their selfish indifference had to be met by reproach and warning; now their fainting courage must be sustained and their feeble faith revived by encouragement and promise.

Ver. 3. **Who is he that is left among you? —— Is it not such (a Temple) as this like nothing in your eyes?** We have no evidence that the feeling of disappointment among the people was openly expressed, or that it was sufficient to prompt them to suspend their labors. All the greater and more considerate is seen to be Jehovah's returning favor. He would have them not merely steadfast, but also cheerful and hopeful in their work. He first addresses those who must have suffered most keenly in reflecting upon the outward appearance of the present structure — those who had beheld the splendor of its predecessor. It was not quite seventy years since the destruction of the First Temple, and there must have been some of those still remaining, whose weeping voices had thrown such a gloom upon the ceremony of laying the foundation of the present House (Ezra iii. 12, 13), with whom the Kingdom of Israel was not a matter of tradition but of personal experience. If they could be comforted, much more likely was it that the younger and more susceptible portion would be encouraged and cheered. It is noteworthy that the contrast between the two temples is made by Jehovah as strong as possible. He seems to admit that their dejection was natural, and by sharing their feelings, so to speak, He gives a most winning and reassuring evidence of his condescension and sympathy. On the construction and proper rendering of the last clause, see Grammatical Note.

Vers. 4, 5. **But come! be strong Zerubbabel — fear not.** The depressing tendency of the present circumstances was admitted; but this was no reason why the people should repine. In the first place, they might plead with perfect confidence the gracious promise which they had a little before so joyfully received (ch. i. 13). And if God was indeed with them, not only would the possession of his favor and the enjoyment of his presence compensate for all past distresses, and be all-sufficient for the new and untried future, but his help, his working with them, would establish the work of their hands, and in his strength they would be strong. He declares to them besides, that, as the Covenant is still in force, they are as much the object of his care as when that Covenant was first ratified, and that in the power of his Spirit resident with and among them, they would continually enjoy his presence and support.

Such is the general sense of vers. 4, 5, and it is not materially affected whatever be the true construction of the latter verse, concerning which there has been much difference of opinion. The chief difficulty lies in the ambiguity of אֶת־הַדָּבָר. The solutions that have been proposed under the supposition that אֶת is the sign of the definite object will first come under review. Some, notably Ewald and Hengstenberg, suppose that the governing word (probably זִכְרוּ: remember), is understood at the beginning of the verse. (Remember) the word which I covenanted with you, when you came forth from Egypt and my spirit dwelt in the midst of you: fear not. Besides the obvious objection, that this construction does not readily suggest itself, it may be remarked that a reference to Ex. xx. 20, which Hengstenberg regards as establishing his view, seems out of place, not only from the

improbability in general of an allusion to a comparatively unimportant expression uttered so many ages before, but also from the utter want of analogy between the present circumstances of the people and the situation supposed to be compared with them here. Moreover (it is not too much to say), on that special occasion the Spirit of God was not resting upon the people, as their conduct immediately thereafter abundantly proves (Ex. xxxii. 7, 8). Finally, there would seem to be not merely a certain incongruity between such a reference and the whole drift of the discourse, but the allusion would absolutely weaken the latter in its well-sustained and lofty flight. Equally unsatisfactory upon exegetical, though preferable on grammatical grounds, is the opinion (of Aben Ezra, D. Kimchi, Œcolampadius, Rosenmüller) that אֶת־הַדָּבָר is the object of וַעֲשׂוּ, either repeated from ver 5 or with the last clause of that verse parenthetical: perform the word (covenant) which I concluded with you . . . . then will my spirit abide with you. As Hitzig remarks, they were not to fulfill the commands of the Law, but to build the Temple. Others again (Ruckert, Hitzig, Koehler, Keil, Henderson, and Pressel) take אֵת as the "sign of the definite nominative of the subject." It is not to be denied that in spite of the elaborate attempt made by Maurer in his *Commentary* to throw doubt upon the existence of this construction, there are a few cases which seem to prove its occasional though rare occurrence. The methods, however, that have been suggested by its ablest supporters to account for it here, virtually make it the sign of the definite object—another form of the view last mentioned. It is supposed either that אֶת־הַדָּבָר is attracted into the case of אֲשֶׁר, a usage unknown to the Hebrew language, a single example of which is wrongly claimed in Zech. viii. 17 (see Ewald, § 277 *d*), or that the Prophet had intended to write הֶעֱמַדְתִּי instead of עֹמֶדֶת after רוּחִי, making all that precedes the object of that verb: (I have established the word . . . . and my Spirit among you). Why he should have abandoned his original intention we are not told. If he had done so, he would probably have erased the אֵת, as any other writer would do under like circumstances. More precarious still is the notion of De Wette, who regards אֵת as = *ipse*, according to the meaning which Gesenius has attributed to that word as the primary one. He renders: this word, etc., referring to the last clause of ver. 4: I am with you. Maurer has been more successful in combating this theory with regard to אֵת, since he has shown clearly that it need never be taken as a distinctive or demonstrative pronoun. Luther, Calvin, Eichhorn, Maurer, Newcome, Noyes, Moore, and Fausset regard אֶת־הַדָּבָר as the "accusative of the norm or standard." So our E. V.: according to the word, etc. It may be admitted that the accusative is sometimes used absolutely in Hebrew to express such a notion; but if it had been so employed here, it is hardly conceivable that the אֵת, which would have been certain to be misunderstood, and moreover, superfluous, would have been inserted. No example can be found of its occurrence in such a construction. We are therefore compelled to assume that אֵת is here a preposition: with, as Cocceius, Marckius, J. D. Michaelis, and Stier have also done. The first member of ver. 5 would thus be an adjunct of the last clause of ver. 4, and the second member parallel to it. Vers. 4, 5 might then be thus paraphrased: "Be strong, my people, for henceforth I am with you. I come into your midst with the Covenant which I made with you, when first you became my people. I renew it with you now that you have returned to Me; I will support and aid you as I have ever done towards my faithful people; My spirit is resting upon you; behold in this my faithfulness proved and my promise of help fulfilled." The only objection of any weight that can be brought against this view is that the repetition of "with" in a clause which is not appositive would create a certain degree of awkwardness in the sentence. This must be admitted; and yet it is probable that the matter has been regarded too much according to the standard of our Occidental analytical and flexible languages, and that the locution would be less offensive to the taste of an ancient Hebrew. Koehler makes the objection, which is repeated by Keil, that if the אֵת of ver. 5 had been a preposition, we should have had in ver. 4, for the sake of euphony, עִמָּכֶם instead of אִתְּכֶם. But in such cases as this it is merely the close recurrence of similar sounds that offends; the fact that the words are identical in meaning is quite without influence. It is therefore a sufficient answer to these objections to say that the obnoxious sound *is* repeated here, where, according to the construction held by these critics, the word אֵת, representing it, is at best superfluous. In accordance with what has been said, **the word which I covenanted with you**, etc., must be understood as the promise of God's continuing presence and favor, suspended upon the obedience of the people, which expressed his obligations with respect to the Covenant made at Sinai, whose validity was to be perpetual. That the words **my Spirit** refer to the sustaining and comforting influence of the Holy Spirit upon the people, and not to the gift of such special qualifications for the present work as were imparted to Bezaleel and his assistants, Ex. xxxi. 1 (Osiander, Koehler), or to that of the spirit of prophecy (Targum, J. D. Michaelis, Newcome, Henderson), is plain if we consider, (1) that the exhortations are addressed to the whole people, and (2) that only through an immediate and widely spread influence could their incipient despondency be removed and exchanged for cheerful courage. Such inspiration received and operating, just as it might be sought and prized, would soon cause them to forget their fallen fortunes, in their efforts to speed the coming of the promised triumph.

They might expect even more than this. Not only would the loss of Israel's ancient glory be more than made up to the little colony by the abiding presence and help of their Covenant God: the very structure on which they were then engaged, though unadorned by the gilded magnificence of the former Temple, would yet, in its purer and more spiritual worship, possess a glory all its own, to which its predecessor had never attained, and would thus prefigure that everlasting Temple, whose transcendent and ever-increasing glory would be displayed in the pilgrimage thither of worshippers from every nation, laden with their choicest offerings, and still more in the unrestrained and continuing presence of the indwelling Spirit. The verses which contain these promises

are so closely connected that we must expound them as a whole.

Vers. 6–9. **For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts . . . . I will give peace, saith Jehovah of Hosts.** The phrase עוֹד אַחַת מְעַט הִיא in ver. 6 has always been the occasion of much dispute. Taking a survey of the different views, we find that the rendering: it is yet a little (while), of the Targum (עוֹד חֲדָא זְעֵירָא הִיא) and the Vulgate (*ad huc unum modicum est*) has been adopted by Luther, Calvin, Grotius, and by later expositors, as Ruckert, Maurer, Hengstenberg, Ewald, Umbreit, and Moore, אַחַת being regarded by most of them as = the indefinite article, but by Hengstenberg as strictly a numeral adjective. Reference is made, in support of this view, to Ex. xvii. 4; Ps. xxxvii. 10; Hos. i. 4, and other passages, in all of which cases, however, מְעַט is either unaccompanied by an attributive or followed by מִזְעָר, — an entirely different construction. Insuperable grammatical difficulties attend this view, whichever of its above-mentioned modifications be adopted, as may be seen from the grammatical note on this verse; and the laws of the language must be suffered to decide against it. This consideration has led the majority of modern expositors to regard the sentence as made up of two members: עוֹד אַחַת and מְעַט הִיא. But among these again there is a disagreement as to the true force of אַחַת. The greater number (including most of the later Anglo-American expositors, after the E. V., Cocceius, Marckius, Koehler, Keil, and Pressel), follow the LXX. (ἔτι ἅπαξ), who, however, left מְעַט הִיא untranslated. They understand פַּעַם, which is often feminine, with אַחַת, and make the expression = once, as in Ez. xxx. 10; 2 Kings vi. 10; Job xl. 5; Josh. v. 2. They accordingly translate the sentence: once more — it is a little while, etc. Hitzig, Hofmann (*Weissagung und Erfüllung*, i. 330), Delitzsch (*Comm. zum Briefe an die Hebräer*, ch. xii. 26), understand עֵת instead of פַּעַם, and render: one period more — a brief one is it, etc. The Prophet is then supposed to have declared (1) "that the period between the present and the predicted great change of the world, will be but one period, *i. e.*, one uniform epoch, and (2) that this epoch will be a brief one" (Delitzsch). But it cannot be shown without overworking the passage that this idea possesses any pertinency to the Prophet's design; it seems strange in the connection. Its advocates also ignore the distinction between prophecy and history. It must therefore be decided that פַּעַם is the word to be supplied, which is distinguished from עֵת as *occasion* is from *period*, and that the proper rendering is: Once more — it is a little (while) — and, etc. The use of וְ to mark the consequent clause of the sentence after a statement of time is in accordance with Hebrew usage; see Green, § 287, 3. הִיא in the parenthetical clause is the copula (Green, § 258, 2) and not the predicate, as Koehler asserts. It is conformed in gender to אַחַת, which it represents. It is natural to assume that עוֹד preserves here its usual sense: yet, again, more. Koehler, however, takes it to mean: henceforth, in the future, and the whole sentence as announcing that from this time forward the world would be shaken once, and only once. This he does not rest upon linguistic grounds, referring, as he does, to 2 Sam. xix. 36; 2 Chron. xvii. 6, only to show that the meaning proposed is admissible. Now, without maintaining the untenable position (as we think it) of Keil, that עוֹד always retains its primary sense of repetition or return, it is yet undeniable that it invariably preserves such a force when connected with a temporal term or phrase, such as אַחַת has been shown to be in our passage. Koehler bases his opinion upon the notion that repetition cannot be implied here, because no such commotions of nature as are here predicted had ever occurred before this time, not even during the delivery of the Law at Sinai, which is usually supposed to be alluded to in the passage. In disproving this statement there is no necessity of referring to the sense of עוֹד as understood by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. xii. 26, 27) or even to the inference which he draws from the words "once more" of our Prophet; for there we have simply the authority of the LXX., which is quoted and applied after the custom of the New Testament writers. We may, however, cite the opinion of that inspired Writer, that it was the shaking of Sinai that the Prophet had in mind — an opinion evidently held without the least reference to the interpretation of עוֹד אַחַת, one, in fact, assumed by him as unquestioned. This any one will perceive on even the most superficial examination of the passage Heb. xii. 18–29. Koehler asserts that the shaking of Sinai cannot be alluded to here, because the commotions here foretold were to affect all nature, while the descriptions of the giving of the Law do not refer to any disturbance beyond the Sinaitic region. But such passages as Judges v. 4, 5; Ps. lxviii. 8, 9; Hab. iii. 6, represent all nature as having been then moved at the coming of God. If it should be urged that such poetical conceptions are largely figurative, it may be replied that the convulsions here alluded to are themselves largely figurative, as will be presently shown. The force of the Prophet's allusion to the phenomena at Sinai we conceive to be this: He is now holding out to the faith of his desponding people the prospect of a new era, which was to be prefigured by their present Temple. The former dispensation, out of which they were soon to pass, and of which the former Temple was the symbol and crown, had been announced and prepared by the shaking of Sinai and the other wonders wrought in the realm of nature during the disciplinary experience of their fathers previous to their entrance into the Promised Land. This second, final dispensation was also to be ushered in by shakings and convulsions. These, in accordance with the more spiritual character of the new era, were to occur not so much in the physical as in the moral sphere, the former class, however, not to be excluded. In accordance with the wider enjoyment of the new economy, its portents, so far as they were to occur in the external world, would affect all nature, so far as they were to affect human thought and action, were to affect all nations. It remains to be seen how this universal shaking is effected. That the words: **I will be shaking the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land,** have chiefly a figurative application, becomes clear from a comparison with such passages as Ps. lx. 2; xviii. 7–15;

Is. xiii. 13; lxiv. 1–3, where God's judgments are represented under images drawn from the phenomena of nature; also from others such as Is. lxv. 17 (comp lxvi 22, and with this the words "once more" in our verse), in which, as the context shows, the blessed results upon humanity are compared to a new heaven and a new earth. We do not even need to go beyond our own book for illustration. In ch. ii. 21 we have expressions similar to those here employed, which must have largely a figurative significance, since the overthrow of the surrounding nations was all that the convulsions there predicted were to accomplish, as our exegesis of the passage will show. The various departments of nature are particularized so as to present a vivid picture of the universal commotions and of the consequent transformation of the world. The prediction has its literal fulfillment also, in so far as remarkable natural phenomena have a portentous significance, in the divine dealings with man, — a truth recognized both by the Scriptures and by profane writers. We must remember, however, that the representation is here of a very general nature. With these conclusions in view it will appear that vers. 6, 7 describe the working of God with its resulting marvelous change in the aspect of the world in general, and more especially in its influence upon mankind nationally and individually,[1] preparing them for the universal reception of the blessings of the promised epoch. The allusion must therefore be to all movements in the history of humanity, either before or since the coming of Christ, which have disposed men to own Christ as their Lord and Saviour. And of these it is most natural to consider as more immediately intended, those various political convulsions which changed the aspect of the civilized world and adjusted the nations for the ready reception and rapid spread of the Gospel — the conquests of Alexander, and the wars of his successors, with their tendency to combine and equalize the nations involved, and to weaken the spirit of national exclusiveness, to promote mutual intercourse through the medium of a common language, in which at first the Old Testament and at last the New were given to the world; followed by the gradual but irresistible progress of Roman supremacy uniting the East and the West, and resulting, on the one hand, in the decline of paganism or national religion, and on the other, in the prevalence of a long and universal peace, so favorable to the spread of the religion of mankind. — Such was the immediate fulfillment of the prediction. But we are not warranted in stopping here. In accordance with the true interpretation of the second clause of ver. 7 (to be given presently), we must regard the convulsions as coextensive with their influence. All nations were to contribute to the glory of the Church of Christ, and whatever exercise of the divine power in the external world or in the spiritual sphere, should dispose man to the service of Jehovah, must be included in that moving of the world which should lead to its transformation. Hence we need not restrict the fulfillment of the prediction to the political changes which prepared the way for the reception of Christianity, as has usually been done, but may behold it also in those subsequent events in the world's history, political, social, or moral, which have subserved (and never more conspicuously than in our own day) the growth and glory of the Church of Christ. We may even admit the partial correctness of Calvin's explanation, that the shaking denotes that marvelous supernatural and violent impulse by which God compels his people to betake themselves to the fold of Christ. The view of Hengstenberg and Keil, at all events, is beside the mark, who suppose that the shaking of the nations is intended to set forth the punitive judgments of God upon the heathen, as leading them to submit themselves to his rule. As a matter of fact, it was not, to any great extent, the judgments of God that led the heathen to accept the Gospel. When, therefore, Hengstenberg attempts to apply his theory to the preparation for Christ's coming, he naturally fails. Appeal is made to vers. 21–23, where a shaking of heaven and earth is predicted in connection with the overthrow of surrounding nations. But the passages are not parallel. Vers. 21–23 are not in the strict sense Messianic; our passage is. The subject there is the opposition between the heathen and God's people; and no hint is given of the conversion of the former. The subject here is the honor to be put upon the Church of Christ (represented by the Second Temple) by its reception of worshippers from all nations. The notion of the punishment of the heathen is remote from the idea of the promise and irrelevant to the discourse as a whole.

The consequence of this divine influence upon mankind is next given: וּבָאוּ חֶמְדַּת כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם. But what is meant by חֶמְדַּת הַגּוֹיִם? The rendering of the E. V.: The desire of all nations, according to which the Messiah is referred to as the object that should satisfy the universal longings of men, has always been a favorite interpretation. The translation of the Vulgate was: "*et venit desideratus cunctis gentibus*," and this was followed by the Reformers (except Calvin), by the older orthodox Commentators generally, and among English Expositors, last by Fausset. So confidently has their opinion been held, that Ribera suspected the later Jews of having corrupted the passage by changing a singular verb into the plural (וּבָאוּ), with the design of throwing difficulties in the way of the true interpretation. It has been accepted so widely by the Christian Church through the influence of the various Versions that it is still everywhere daily heard in their hymns and prayers. It is natural, moreover, that many should have been unwilling to give up a prediction which seemed to embody such a great and inspiring truth. But such an interpretation cannot stand the test of correct criticism. In the first place, we must have regard to the aim of the discourse, the encouragement of the people in building the Temple, by assuring them that its glory would yet be great. This object would not have been subserved by foretelling the coming of a Person for whom all the Gentiles were longing. Such a promise would give no special comfort to the Jews. The only reason why the "nations"[1] were referred to must have been that they themselves would contribute to the future glory. Secondly, it is impossible to see what connection the silver and the gold of ver. 8 can have with the coming of the Messiah, though that verse is evidently introduced as confirmatory of this. But,

1 Nations are named here in accordance with the guarded and partial representation of the salvation of the Gentiles peculiar to the Old Testament. But individuals are not therefore excluded; they are rather plainly and specially regarded; for the constraining force is ultimately not outward compulsion, but the influence of the Spirit upon the heart, as the discourse itself implies.

finally, the view in question is untenable grammatically. בָּאוּ is plural, while its subject חֶמְדַּת is singular. That subject, therefore, cannot be a person. It is impossible to evade the force of this argument; and when we discover that such expedients have been adopted as to assume that Christ's two Natures are referred to, the hopelessness of the attempt becomes evident. It has indeed been urged that when a plural noun depends upon and follows a singular, the verb may in Hebrew agree with the plural. This is true in certain cases, namely, when the predicate may naturally be referred to the governed word as containing the controlling idea of the sentence (comp. Green, § 277). This is of course not the case here. It is not the nations themselves who are represented as coming, but their חֶמְדַּת. More admissible grammatically is the modification proposed by Cocceius, who translates: I will shake all nations, that they may come to the desire of all nations." But the first argument adduced against the preceding view is decisive also against this.

It only remains that we take חֶמְדַּת as a collective, — which its originally abstract sense renders natural, and as the plural verb demands.[1] The true sense of חמדה here may be readily deduced from the usage of its primitive חמד: to desire, to take delight in. The derivation means, first, the emotion of pleasure, and next, an object of desire or delight (1 Sam. ix. 20; Dan. xi. 37). We have now only to decide whether it relates to persons or to things. The former sense with the explanation: what is valuable or worthy among the heathen — *i. e.*, the best of the Gentiles — has been adopted by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Cappellus, Rückert, Hitzig, Umbreit, and Fürst (in his *Wörterbuch*). But here, also, all connection with ver. 8 fails us. The only meaning which satisfies all the conditions of the passage is: the desirable things of the nations; not: the things desired by the nations realized in the blessings of the Messiah's reign, as Henderson holds, — an explanation which like those previously noticed should be discarded because of its want of connection with the context, and its irrelevancy to the discourse as a whole. We accordingly translate: the desirable or precious things, the treasures of the nations, as most of the later Commentators have done. So the LXX. appear to have understood it (ἥξει τὰ ἐκλεκτὰ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν, not ἥξουσι, not persons but things). Their explanation was adopted in the Itala and Vulgate, and by Kimchi, and was completely established by Calvin, the most judicious and penetrating of Commentators. Since the Reformation it has been held, among others by Drusius and Vitringa, by Rosenmüller, Maurer, Hengstenberg, Hofmann, Koehler, Keil, Ewald,[2] and among English Expositors, by Adam Clarke, Newcome, Noyes, Moore, and Cowles. Hengstenberg, indeed, followed by Moore, assumes untenably that חֶמְדַּת properly means beauty, but both writers adopt the usual explanation in their exposition. From whatever stand-point we regard this interpretation, its correctness becomes apparent. Grammatically it is unassailable. If we revert to the occasion of the discourse, we find that it contains the very ground of encouragement which the desponding people required. They had no need to be disheartened because of the present condition of the Temple. The outward adornments which had rendered the former structure so attractive were indeed absent, but these would be more than surpassed in splendor by the precious gifts which all nations should yet bring, to make glorious Jehovah's dwelling-place. If we regard the immediate context, the interpretation becomes self-evident. The display of the precious metals in the first Temple was mournfully remembered by the people in their poverty. But the silver and gold of the whole earth were God's, much more glorious would be that Temple which should be adorned by the treasures of all nations which He should dispose to his worship and service.

We have next to inquire into the *fulfillment* of this remarkable prediction. And the question first suggests itself: is the promise to be fulfilled in a literal or in a figurative sense, or in both? The answer will throw additional light also upon the concluding words of ver. 7: **I will fill this house with glory.**[3] Let us now see to what extent the Gentiles did bring of their treasures to the second Temple. The command of Darius Hystaspes, given soon after, that abundant supplies should be allowed the Jews to forward their labors, cannot properly come into consideration here, because it was not a consequence of any such shaking of the nations as that just predicted. The same remark applies to the presents of Artaxerxes Longimanus and his councillors through Ezra. We must look beyond the mighty political convulsions of the age of Alexander and his successors, in which, as we have seen, the shaking of the nations first actually began. And here, as Calvin has shown, and Hengstenberg more fully, the renewal of the second Temple by Herod must be excluded from consideration. Herod was a foreigner, it is true, but his labors were not prompted by reverence for Jehovah, but by worldly policy.[4] But the case was different with the offerings of those proselytes who, in the decline of polytheism sought to satisfy their religious aspirations by paying their homage to the one true God in his Temple. These gifts, however, were little more than a pledge of the higher, more glorious fulfillment. Otherwise the prophecy would have remained unfulfilled. The Temple (in its true idea and divine purpose) must be merged into the Church of Christ, the offerings of whose worshippers must have that predominantly spiritual character which should mark the Messianic times. (1.) Because the prediction is given as a revelation from God. Its fulfillment is certain.[5] A literal fulfillment has been

1 Even in Ps. cxix. 103 the subject is collective; in Jer. xi. 34 it is distributive.

2 Ewald, who formerly (in his Comm.) maintained that the "choice (persons)" of the Gentiles were meant (see above), now seems to agree with this opinion. In his *Sprachlehre* (§ 317 *b*), he explains the word by *Kostbarkeiten*.

3 Compare for the idea of glory imparted by material treasures, Nahum ii. 10 (9).

4 It has been said that Herod really erected a third Temple instead of repairing the second. But this mode of expression shows a want of perception of the divine and prophetic idea of the institution. Herod's Temple must still be regarded as the second, even though it be conceded that he erected a new structure. A new Temple must introduce a new era.

5 Some of the Jewish Commentators would not readily agree with this. Philippson (*Israelitische Bibel*, ii. 1489), after showing that Herod's Temple, which he rightly refuses to regard as a third Temple, was with all its splendor still inferior to Solomon's, and after admitting that ver. 7, which he renders correctly, has not been literally fulfilled, remarks as follows: "The Prophets give promises for the

shown to be untenable; we have therefore to seek a spiritual one. (2.) This promise is but one of a large class of similar predictions in the Old Testament whose spiritual realization is assured by the New. Comp. Is. lx. 5, 9–11; Micah x. 13; Zech. xiv. 14, with Rev. xxi. 24–26. The harmony and connection of our passage with these is convincing. (3.) After the restoration the outward splendor of the Temple was never a matter of Divine cognizance. The rebukes of the prophets directed against the people were not due to any failure on their part to enhance its external glory. Indeed we have good reason to think that they were encouraged to make this of little account. It is at least certain that the spirit cherished by the Jews, which ultimately led to their rejection, and to the destruction of the Temple, was the sentiment that found expression in the reverence for the gold of the Temple, which called forth so scathing a denunciation from the lips of Jesus, and that, in his refusal to admire the grandeur of that structure, He was moved by something more than the mere prevision of its coming ruin, that He recognized in that terrible calamity the divinely just result of the loss of spiritual worship which universally prevailed. And if the failure to discern that the Temple was only the embodiment and symbol of spiritual truths marked the decline and fall of Judaism, it was necessary that the CHURCH OF GOD, the true Temple beneath the gold, and outward adornings, should without losing its identity, divest itself of external form, to invite and receive spiritual worshippers from all nations. Upon these grounds we claim the fitness and necessity of a spiritual fulfillment of this prediction. What the treasures are which all nations were to bring to the Church of God is not far to seek. All material offerings presented since the establishment of Christ's kingdom, for the purpose of advancing its extension or inward growth, are of course included. But the offerings of the heart — the prayers and praises of the multitudes that throng more and more about the gates of Zion, as the nations are shaken more and more by forces of the Spirit's moving, and their self-renouncing devotion of soul and life to her service, — mainly constitute the perpetual and progressive fulfillment of the prediction. And in the presence of God among his adoring people we have the idea embodied in the ancient Temple realized, and the crowning promises of this prophecy fulfilled: **I will fill this House with glory . . . . In this place I will give peace.** It is the presence of Jehovah that sheds glory upon the Church, his Temple and dwelling-place, that imparts inward peace and joy, and outward peace and prosperity (שָׁלוֹם) to its members in ever-increasing measure; but that Presence is vouchsafed to meet and reward the submission and service of his people, gathered from every nation under heaven.

There is another important point in connection with this subject which needs to be discussed. The fact that all these promises are applied directly to "this house," and that, as the subject of such glorious predictions the second Temple is sharply contrasted with the first, proves that there must have been something connected with the former, as compared with the latter, constituting it a more fit representative of the Church of Christ. This feature of the discourse is worthy of a much fuller treatment than is here practicable. We only remark at present that the cardinal distinction must have consisted in the more spiritual character which life, and faith, and worship assumed in the best times of Judaism after the Restoration, the Temple being of course understood to represent then, as of old, the theocratic community of which it was the centre. Rites and ceremonies retired more into the background; and prayer began to assume its true place in public worship. The religious knowledge of the people was kept up through the regular public reading and distribution of the Scriptures, which were early collected into their present canonical form. Synagogues were established, the people having learnt at Babylon that God's presence might be enjoyed in their assemblies in any place or circumstances. Thus there was kept alive throughout the nation a higher and purer type of religion than it had known in the days when the first Temple with its outward splendor and gorgeous ritual excited the admiration of the people, but too seldom led their thoughts to the contemplation of the truths it expressed and prefigured. These we regard as some of the characteristics of the second Temple, which on the one hand exalted it above its predecessor, and on the other assimilated it to the Church of Christ, of which it thus became the fit representative in the Divine promises. This was the true glory of the Second Temple.

The question finally suggests itself: If this exposition be correct, why were these promises veiled in such a material form? The same difficulty must be equally felt in the consideration of the similar passages in the Prophets already cited. It is not a sufficient answer to say that such is the uniform drapery in which prophetic promise is clothed. The answer which exhibits the inner fitness and necessity of the mode of communication, is that such a form was the only one suited to the conditions under which the promise was given. Its recipients would have been dissatisfied with the full and clear revelation as not meeting their immediate needs, and moreover could neither have grasped its meaning nor appreciated its worth. They were not as yet prepared to receive the doctrine of an invisible Temple and a universal Church, as the nations themselves were not prepared for the coming and reign of their common Redeemer. Hence it was best that the glories of his kingdom should be described in words suited to their apprehensions and requirements. He also, when He came, in his predictions as well as in his other instructions, taught as his hearers were able to bear them. And even we are under the same tutelage with respect to the mysteries of the New Jerusalem; for we read that it has its Temple too (Rev. vii. 15), and yet we are told that it has no Temple (Rev. xxi. 22); and the announcement of the final and complete fulfillment of our prophecy (Rev. xxi. 24–26) is little more than a repetition of the prophecy itself in a material form identically the same.

future, not in order to predict, but in order to ameliorate the present and to incite to holy actions. Israelites have themselves made the fulfillment of these prophecies impossible by refusing to rise to those higher conditions in which alone, according to the declarations of the Prophets themselves, the promises would be fulfilled." Comp. p. 922. This is the logical result of the Jewish theory; for though some of their Commentators (*e. g.*, Isaaki, Abarbanel) interpret the passage as predicting a future Temple, comparing Ezek. xliii. etc., yet as this view is in plain contradiction of the Prophet's announcement of speedy fulfillment, others are, in consistency, driven to renounce the idea of any true fulfillment whatever.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The only hope of the Church of God lies in his favor. If at any time it is weak and languishing, its sad condition is directly due to the withdrawal of God's presence. But his attitude towards his people is not the result of caprice or of change of purpose. He is bound to them by a Covenant (ver. 5) to which He ever remains faithful. It is their unfaithfulness that banishes Him from among them, and a return to obedience that restores his favor and help. The latter result is as assured as the former (comp. vers. 4, 5, with i. 12, 13). These truths furnish an antidote to despondency, and a ground of confidence as well as a motive to renewed consecration.

2. The World is the tributary, and the minister of the Church. All revolutions, political, social, or moral, that affect the nations, are harbingers and preparations of that spiritual and inward but no less powerful influence which is to impel them within the boundaries of the kingdom of Christ. And the treasures of the nations, all that is desirable and valuable in the achievements of human labor, all the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the ages, and all that is pure and lofty in human motives and purposes, are the offerings which the world has brought, or is yet to bring to the Church — "the glory and honor of the Gentiles" presented in the courts of Zion (Rev. xxi. 26).

3. The development and progress of the Church of God are not marked by an increase of external splendor. Its true glory does not consist in the magnificence of its houses of worship, or in the pomp and impressiveness of its ceremonies and rituals. The First Temple was distinguished by these outward attractions; but the Second Temple in which they were so inferior, is by the Prophet contrasted with the former, and chosen as the fit representative, nay even as the partial realization of the promised Church of Christ. Christians know, as the pious worshippers in the second Temple were taught, that the glory of the Church is derived from the purity of her worship, the devotion of her ever-increasing members, and the abiding presence of God through his Spirit. Even the Shekinah was wanting in the second Temple; but the faithful worshippers there, like those who now in every nation worship God in spirit and in truth, could rejoice that they did not need among them his visible glory, while his presence was felt in their hearts.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 3 (comp. with ver. 9). Long life is a blessing and happiness to a servant of God, if at its close he is permitted to behold the revival of God's kingdom and increasing signs of its coming glory.

Vers. 4, 5. God's people should dwell much upon their past history. They will thus find that whatever checks and distresses they have experienced were due to their own unfaithfulness, and that God never failed to fulfill his part in the Covenant, whether He chastened or blessed. In the adversities of the present they may be assured that their true hope lies in the presence and power of the Spirit, who dwells with them according as they fulfill their part in the Covenant.

CALVIN: God is present with his own in various ways; but He especially shows that He is present when, by his Spirit, He confirms weak minds.

Vers. 6, 7. In the midst of the changes, political, social, and moral, that affect the nations, by what methods may God's people best seek to attract them with their priceless treasures within the Church of Christ?

HENRY: The shaking of the nations is often in order to the settling of the Church and the establishing of the things that cannot be shaken.

MOORE: The kingdoms of the world are but the scaffolding for God's spiritual Temple, to be thrown down when their purpose is accomplished. — The uncertainty and transitoriness of all that is earthly should lead men to seek repose in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. — The glory of the New Testament dispensation is the conversion of the heathen.

Ver. 8. Since the earth and its fullness are the Lord's, his people need never fear either that they will be left destitute, or that the "riches of the Gentiles" will not be converted to the use of his Church.

HENRY: Every penny bears God's superscription as well as Cæsar's.

MOORE: The comparative poverty of the Church is not because God cannot bestow riches upon her, but because there are better blessings than wealth that are often incompatible with its possession.

Ver. 9. CALVIN: Though they should gather the treasures of a thousand worlds into one mass, such a glory would still be perishable.

MOORE: The New Testament in all its outward lowliness has a glory in its possession of a completed salvation, far above all the outward magnificence of the Mosaic dispensation. — The kingdom of Christ makes peace between God and man, and in its ultimate results will make peace between man and man, and destroy all that produces discord and confusion, war and bloodshed on the earth.

PRESSEL: Every house of God is a place where God gives peace, and every place of peace is also a house of God.

— On the whole discourse: The glory of God's kingdom: (1.) Its conditions — the faithfulness of his people to all their covenant obligations and duties, their obedience, their faith, and their courage, securing his favor and help. (2.) Its nature — the constant reception of increasing multitudes of "Gentiles" with their "treasures" of devotion and service; and the abiding presence of God's Spirit diffusing peace and joy.

FOURTH ADDRESS.

Past Calamities accounted for; and Immediate Prosperity announced.

Chapter II. 10–19.

10 On the twenty-fourth (day) of the ninth (month) in the second year of Darius,
11 there was a word of Jehovah by the hand of Haggai the Prophet, saying: Thus
12 saith Jehovah of Hosts: Ask, I pray you, the Priests[1] for instruction, saying: If[2] a
man shall bear holy flesh in the lappet of his garment, and touch with his lappet
upon bread, or upon pottage, or upon wine, or upon oil, or upon any food, shall it
13 become holy; and the Priests answered and said: No. And Haggai said: If one
defiled[3] through a (dead) person touch any of these, shall it be unclean; and the
14 Priests answered and said: It shall be unclean. Then Haggai answered and said:
So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith Jehovah, and so is every
work of their hands; and whatever they offer there [at the altar] is unclean.
15 And now, I pray you direct your heart from this day and backward, before the
16 placing of stone upon stone in the house of Jehovah. Since such things were,[4]
one has been going[5] to a heap of sheaves of fifty (measures), and there were (but)
ten; he has been going to the wine-vat to draw out fifty pails, and there were (but)
17 twenty. I have smitten you with blight, and with mildew, and with hail — all the
18 works[6] of your hands; yet ye (returned)[7] not to me, saith Jehovah. Direct, I
pray you, your hearts from this day and backward, from the twenty-fourth day of
the ninth (month), to the day on which the Temple of Jehovah was founded; direct
19 your heart. Is the grain yet in the barn? And as to the vine and the fig tree,
and the pomegranate and olive tree, they have not borne.[8] From this day I will
bless.[9]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 11. — אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים is the direct and תּוֹרָה the indirect object.

2 Ver. 12. — This verse contains a sentence virtually conditional, of which הֲיִקְדָּשׁ is the apodosis, and all that precedes the protasis. But as הֵן is properly an interjection the strict translation would be: Behold, let any one bear, etc. Some of the articles of food here mentioned are made definite, being considered severally as forming a distinct class. See Green, § 245 *d*.

3 Ver. 13. — For the construction of טְמֵא נֶפֶשׁ see the exegesis.

4 Ver. 16. — מִהְיוֹתָם. See Green, § 267 *d*, and compare the exegesis.

5 Ver. 16. — בָּא . . . . בָּא are used impersonally: one came, etc. These sentences are virtually conditional, וְ marking the apodosis in each case.

6 Ver. 17. — אֶת כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂה. This clause is in apposition to the object of the verb in the one preceding.

7 Ver. 17. — אֵין אֶתְכֶם. See the exegesis.

8 Ver 19. — נָשָׂא agrees with the nearest subject and is understood with the others. —

9 Ver. 19. — אֲבָרֵךְ is here used absolutely. There is no need of supplying an object.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The ministry of the Prophet had at last achieved its most important object, and with the access of new zeal and devotion to God's service among the people, a powerful impulse had been given to their national and religious life. Another message was now appropriate, and that for the accomplishment of two ends: first, that the people might be forewarned against a course of conduct, which would again alienate the favor of God; second, that they might be further secured against despondency by the prospect of rich and speedy blessings, as the consequence of their repentance and obedience.

Ver. 10. The message which follows was delivered about two months after the preceding, while the people were still feeling, probably, in an intensified degree, the pressure of the temporal distress which was described in the first discourse. It was an occasion peculiarly suitable for the communication of such a message. It was the ninth month (Chisleu, November–December) when the early rain was expected to water the newly-sown crops. Their fields had lately (ch. i. 6) been giving a very scanty harvest, and there would naturally be much anxiety about the results of the labor of the present season; and great rejoicing at the receival of an assurance of its success.

Ver. 11. We agree with Ewald, Koehler, Keil,

et al. in regarding תּוֹרָה here as meaning not the law but instruction. If the former had been intended, the article would have been present. That the answer to the inquiry would be obtained from the law does not of course affect the question.

Ver. 12. **If a man shall bear . . . . and the Priests answered: No.** The priests answered correctly and according to a natural and divinely sanctioned inference from Lev. vi. 20 (27). In that passage the flesh of the animal sacrificed is said to render sacred any object (כֹּל אֲשֶׁר there probably refers both to persons and to things) with which it may come in contact, a garment sprinkled with its blood being particularized. It is not said that the character of legal sacredness is communicated indefinitely. The enumeration in our passage of the most common and necessary articles of food is in accordance with the lesson to be enforced; see on ver. 14.

Ver. 13. **And Haggai said . . . . he will be unclean.** Comparing our verse with Lev. xxii. 4, and that passage with Num. v. 2; ix. 6, 7, 10, we find that the phrase טָמֵא לְנֶפֶשׁ=טְמֵא נֶפֶשׁ. defiled with respect to a person. Comparing again with Lev. xxi. 11; Num vi. 6, we find that מֵת is to be understood in the latter expression, which therefore means: unclean on account of a dead person. The ellipsis is seen to be natural, when we remember that defilement occasioned by personal contact usually proceeded from contact with a dead body, and that this species of defilement was one of the deepest (see Num. xix. 11–16). Keil translates: defiled on or through the soul of a dead man, a rendering whose correctness he fails to prove both here and in his exposition of Lev. xix. 28. Besides giving a contradictory explanation, he would refuse to recognize one of the most common meanings of נֶפֶשׁ, that of person transferred to the sense of body. The explanation of Koehler is worth quoting. He takes *nephesh* in its primary sense of breath, and thinks that one who comes in contact with the breath of a dead man is referred to. This he does not seek to establish on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, as might be expected, but by the statement that "as long as the corpse is not completely consumed, even if the skeleton only is left, a remnant of the breath of life still remains seeking to extricate itself so as to leave the body to perish utterly."—Then follows the application to the circumstances of the people of these principles of the Ceremonial Law. It will be noticed that the priests and the prophet act in accordance with their proper functions: the former declare or interpret the precepts of the Law; the latter applies them.

Ver. 14. **And Haggai answered and said . . . is unclean.** No distinction is intended to be expressed between "nation" and "people" here. The repetition is a hebraism; comp. Zeph. ii. 9. **So is this people**, etc. = So is it with this people. **Before me** means: in my presence as Ruler and Judge. The key to the correct application of the ceremonial precepts, which have occasioned difficulty to some interpreters, is found in the last clause of the verse, taking into account that שָׁם = at the altar (Ezra iii. 3). The people, suffering from scarcity of food consequent upon the failure of their crops, had, it seems, been continuing in some measure their regular sacrificial offerings, though they had been neglecting the building of the Temple. These oblations had not been accepted, as they might have inferred from the withholding of the divine blessing, the true cause of which is now impressively illustrated. As he who was ceremonially unclean tainted everything with which he came in contact, so had they, suffering from God's displeasure on account of their disregard of his claims, communicated the effects of that displeasure to all the labor of their hands, which profited them nothing. And, as the consecrated flesh of the sacrifices did not convey its sacredness to any objects beyond those immediately in the service, so all their external good works, even their offerings upon God's altar, could not reach in its effects beyond the mere ceremonial fulfillment of outward observances, could not secure those blessings which are the reward of living, operative holiness. The following verses (15–17) now exhibit the condition of the people as proving the above illustration.

Ver. 15. **And now apply your heart, I pray you . . . apply your heart.** The people are bidden review their condition from the present time to the period preceding the resumption of the Temple. מַעְלָה in such a connection of course means backward. The time when the work was resumed is specified here, because it was the turning-point in their fortunes. Their condition before that event is recalled for their contemplation that they might connect their distress then suffered with their unfaithfulness; and the brief period succeeding their return to obedience is included because they could not so soon recover from their embarrassments, no harvest having yet intervened. מִטֶּרֶם therefore serves a twofold purpose: מִן (from) denotes that the retrospect should properly begin with the resumption of the work, and טֶרֶם (before) indicates the direction in which the survey should extend. That it is the resumption of building that is referred to, and not the first feeble efforts of the returning exiles, is plain from the circumstances of the people to be described and the lesson to be enforced.

Ver. 16. **Since such things were . . . . and there were (but) twenty.** מִהְיוֹתָם, literally: from these things being (so). This means, from the time when affairs began to be in the condition referred to. It is clear that מִן need not have the same reference here as in ver. 15, where it points backward. Here the people are not commanded to take a review of the past; the Prophet is now describing a certain state of affairs consequent upon their unfaithfulness. There it was a retrospect; here it is a view of cause and effect. The force of the verse is precisely that of ch. i. 9. The harvests did not fulfill expectation. Their actual yield did not even correspond to the appearance of the crops when gathered in. A heap of sheaves which seemed to contain twenty measures (it is best to supply סְאָה, as E. V. does), was, when threshed, found to contain but ten. A quantity of grapes usually affording fifty purahs yields only twenty. יֶקֶב is applied either to the press itself, or to the vat beneath into which the liquor flows. Here the latter is meant; after pressing, they went to draw from it, expecting the usual proportion of wine. פּוּרָה, which in Is. lxiii. 3 means a

wine-press, must be used here of the vessel which was ordinarily employed to draw up the wine from the lower receptacle. It naturally came to be adopted as a convenient measure for such purposes, much in the same way as our "bucket" is sometimes referred to as a measure. The LXX. translating μετρητὴς make it = בַּת (a bath). Such an ellipsis as E. V. assumes to exist in the original is incredible.

Ver. 17. **I have smitten you with blight . . . saith Jehovah.** The immediate cause of the shortness and inferior quality of the crops is now presented. On the connection between the first and second clauses, see Grammatical note. The people themselves are said to have been smitten, because the calamities specified fell upon their crops, the labor of their hands (comp. Virgil's *boumque labores*), thus disappointing their nearest hopes. Compare, as exactly analogous, ch. i. 10, 11. These passages further show that there is no need of rendering with E. V.: in all the labor of your hands. The last clause is difficult. Most take אֶתְכֶם as a nominative, and supply שַׁבְתֶּם (ye have not returned) after Amos iv. 9, the former and latter parts of which passage present a resemblance to our verse probably fortuitous. But the cases in which אֶת accompanies a nominative are so rare that such a construction is not to be assumed except under exegetical distress. More admissible is the translation of the Vulgate, Itala, Umbreit, *et al.*: *et non fuit in vobis qui reverteretur*. To obtain this אֲשֶׁר is supplied, and אִתְּכֶם read. It ought not to be objected with Hitzig and Koehler, that אֵת does not mean among or in, but only beside or with; for 2 Kings ix. 25 furnishes an unmistakable instance of the former sense. The extent of the change involved in the Text is a more valid objection. It is better, with Maurer, Hitzig, Ewald, and Keil, to construe according to the principle laid down by Ewald (§ 262 *b*), that אֵין (properly the construct of אַיִן), being usually followed by a verbal suffix, because containing a verbal conception (= there is not), here takes the sign of the object according to the construction after most verbs. We therefore render: but ye were not towards me, *i. e.*, ye did not return to me. Hos. iii. 3, 2 Kings vi. 11, afford examples of such constructions.

Ver. 18. **Direct, I beseech you, your heart . . direct your heart.** This verse has received most diverse and in some instances most extraordinary interpretations. The main difficulty arises from the peculiar use of לְמִן. Most of the English expositors adopt the rendering of E. V. without explanation, or (as Newcome) supply "and" instead of "even" before "from," in order to make the contradiction involved appear slighter. Fausset thinks that the time is to be measured backward from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, and forward from the founding of the Temple, or that the same adverb, מַעְלָה, can be taken in different senses when connected with the same verb, which is absurd. Indeed, it would seem very improbable that מַעְלָה here should be employed in a sense different from that in which it occurs in ver. 15, as Eichhorn, Hitzig, Koehler, *et al.* assume that it must, in making it refer to the future. If now we could suppose, with the authors last named, and Pressel, that the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month was the day on which the foundation was laid, all difficulty would vanish. The people would again be directed to review their condition, and to contrast it with the blessings which they would henceforth receive, as described in the next verse. But the objections to this are insuperable: (1) The Temple was founded in the second year of Cyrus, fifteen years before (Ezra iii. 10); and if we compare Ezra iv. 4 with iv. 23, 24, we shall see that the work upon it was continued, however feebly, until within two years of the present prophecy, so that the foundation could not have fallen into decay. (2) Ch. ii. 3 implies that the new structure had then become somewhat advanced. If it were absolutely necessary to regard לְמִן as = מִן (from), we should be driven to conclude that the text, as it now stands, is corrupt. But the analogy of such words as לְמֵרָחוֹק (to a distance) אֶל־מִחוּץ (to the outside), shows that the meaning to or until[1] is not impossible. So Rosenmüller, Maurer, Ewald, Moore, *et al.*, have understood it. This, it must be confessed, is a somewhat precarious resort; but it seems the only one at all defensible. The sense thus obtained for the whole verse is appropriate. In order to make the blessings to be announced in ver. 19 appear in strong contrast to the distress pictured in vers. 16, 17, the Prophet repeats the injunction of ver. 15, but with a longer range of retrospect. The whole period back to the time when the foundation of the Temple was laid in the reign of Cyrus was one of more or less distress on account of the unfaithfulness of the people; for between that time and the present all the efforts that they had made to complete the work were spasmodic and feeble.

Ver. 19. **Is the grain yet in the barn . . . I will bless.** The parallelism and the connection show that הַזֶּרַע is to be taken not in the sense of corn for sowing, but of corn already raised. The interrogation is equal to a strong negation. עַד probably means here *quoad*, as to, in which sense it is of frequent occurrence. Maurer prefers to render: *ad huc*, as yet, a sense undeniable in Job i. 18; but there is no necessity of assuming such a rare usage here. The distress before described is brought nearer to the feelings of the people by the reminder that it was still present. They could then better appreciate the worth of the coming relief. **From this day**, must be taken in a somewhat loose sense, as denoting the beginning of that period of blessing which was to reward the obedience and devotion now displayed by the people. There is thus seen to be no inconsistency between the promise and the conditions described in ver. 15.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The ceremonial institutes of the ancient Law were designed to illustrate man's relations to God as being under his favor or under his displeasure. The conditions and treatment of uncleanness, while setting forth most vividly the loathsomeness and defilement of sin, exhibited as clearly the effects of God's anger against it, which was shown to extend to all the sinner's experience, removing

[1] מִן is not therefore pleonastic; it still marks the limits of the period specified, separating it from the preceding according to its original force.

him beyond the reach of covenant mercies and blessings. While the divine displeasure was manifested towards an individual or a nation, no amount of outward religious observances could appease it, just as no frequency of contact with legally consecrated offerings could impart sacredness to any other object.

2. A return to God by his people under either Covenant has always been followed immediately by the bestowal of blessings peculiar to the Covenant. In Old Testament times a fullness of external mercies was chiefly expected and received. But before these blessings could, in the ordinary course of providence, be vouchsafed, spiritual and higher blessings were invariably imparted (see ver. 19) — the assurance of God's favor, the abiding presence and assistance of his Spirit. The New Covenant, while it has modified in form many of the provisions and conditions of the Old, is not superior to it in the certainty of its fulfillment; and nothing is better adapted to revive and strengthen our trust in God's promises than a frequent recurrence to his dealings towards his ancient people.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 12–14. Our inward character, and not our privileges or associations or outward conduct, will determine God's attitude toward us.

Calvin: Whoever intrudes external ceremonies on God, in order to pacify Him, trifles with Him most childishly. The fountain of good works is integrity of heart, and the purpose to obey God and consecrate the life to Him. — Whatever we touch is polluted by us, unless there be purity of heart to sanctify our works.

Grotius: There are many ways of vice, but only one of virtue, and that a difficult one.

Fausset: Those who are unclean before God on account of "dead works," thereby render unclean all their services.

Vers. 15–17. Matthew Henry: When we take no care of God's interests we cannot expect that He will take care of ours.

Moore: Men are inclined to assign any other cause for their sufferings than their sins, yet this is usually the true cause. — Disappointment of our hopes on earth should make us lift our eyes to heaven to learn the reason. — Affliction will harden the heart if it be not referred to God as its author.

Vers. 18, 19. Moore: Pondering over the past is often the best way of providing for the future.

Fausset: From the moment we unreservedly yield ourselves up to God, we may confidently calculate on his blessing.

FIFTH ADDRESS.

Preservation of the People in the Convulsions that should destroy the surrounding Nations.

Chapter II. 20–23.

20 And there was a word of Jehovah a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth
21 (day) of the month, saying: Speak to Zerubbabel, Governor of Judah, saying:
22 I will be shaking[1] the heavens and the earth; And I will overturn the throne of
the kingdoms, and will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and
will overthrow the chariot and its riders, and the horses and their riders shall sink
23 down, each by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith Jehovah of Hosts
I will take thee, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, my servant, saith Jehovah, and will
place thee as a signet, for thee have I chosen, saith Jehovah of Hosts.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Vers. 21, 22. — The force and construction of מַרְעִישׁ in connection with the following preterites, are the same as those of the same word in ver. 6: I shall be shaking (a participle being indefinite as to time) and (shall) have overturned.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

In order to supply all that was now needed to strengthen and encourage his people, the Prophet delivers, on the same day, a second message, predicting their safety amidst the upheavals of the Gentile world, and assuring them of God's guardian care over their rulers as a pledge of this promise.

Vers. 20–22. **And there was a word of Jehovah . . . . each by the sword of his brother.** The shaking of the heavens and the earth here predicted coincides to some extent with that foretold in vers. 6, 7. To establish the distinction that does exist, we have only to assume that the commotions to be excited among the Gentiles to carry out God's purposes with respect to the world are to be understood as limited by the results to be accomplished. In the passage referred to, as we have seen, the ultimate submission and worship of the world is announced; here we are told of nothing beyond the temporal security of the Jews (for how long a period is not indicated) amidst the mutual destruction of other nationalities. It is most prob-

able that the reference is to wars in which those countries were involved, with which Israel had been brought into contact, — Babylon (whose capture and cruel treatment by Darius Hystaspes, after rebellion against him, occurred soon after the delivery of this prophecy); Persia in its conflicts with Scythia, etc., and especially with Greece; Syria in its protracted wars with Egypt. These limitations seem to be correct: (1) because the prophecy does not say that the Jews would be preserved in contending against other nations, but only during the mutual contentions of the latter; (2) because we find that the Jews did actually succumb to the power of the Gentiles. **The throne of the kingdoms** here means their government, that which binds men together as a nation (comp. Dan. vii. 27). This is based upon **the strength of the kingdoms,** which is shattered by the destruction of their armies. **Every man by the sword of his brother,** asserts in a general way that the nations in their wars would become self-destructive as well as mutually destructive.

Ver. 23. **In that day.** This expression denotes, according to its usual prophetic indefiniteness, not the period introduced by the commotions just predicted, — a supposition tenable only by those who assume that by Zerubbabel the Messiah is directly intended, — but the period, of whatever duration it should be, during which the commotions should continue. If the verses just preceding had alluded to any remote consequences of the conflicts between the nations, the former explanation would be admissible. **I will place thee as a signet-ring.** The signet-ring was held very precious, and worn constantly by its oriental possessor; comp. Song of Sol. viii. 6; Jer. xxii. 24. The announcement thus conveyed, that during these convulsions Jehovah, who had chosen Zerubbabel as his servant, would take him under his peculiar and special care, is probably to be accounted for and explained in the following way: The Jews, although it was now several years since they had returned from exile, had been constituted a theocratic nation, and recognized as such by God only through the erection of the Temple, which was in fact the condition of their national existence. In the midst of the convulsions that were to shake the surrounding nations, they would naturally feel themselves insecure. To anticipate and allay this anxiety, it was now announced to them that their government and institutions would be preserved. For Zerubbabel, though appointed by the Persian monarch who was temporarily to be their ruler, was chosen by Jehovah also as the representative of the throne and family (Luke iii. 27) of David, which was to stand secure, while the kingdoms of the earth should fall. In this promise Zerubbabel is fitly taken to represent all the rulers of the Jews during the period within the range of the prophecy. He was the first and the greatest of their post-exilic rulers. In a theocratic relation he was the restorer of the dynasty of David. What was promised to him we may regard as equally promised to all the faithful rulers of Judæa who should come after him. They also would be chosen of God and the objects of his watchful care, as the guardians of his people. This we regard as the direct occasion of the promise. It is probable, however, that these words were addressed to Zerubbabel (comp. Zech. iv. 6–10), partly to give him encouragement in his direction and supervision of the work upon the Temple, and in his efforts to mould and control the little community at such a critical period of its history.

This discourse has been regarded by most orthodox commentators as Messianic in the strict sense, namely, as gaining its full and only adequate application when understood of the Messiah and his kingdom. It is clear, however, from the foregoing exposition, that it is Messianic only in so far as the progress and prosperity of God's people under the Old Covenant prefigured the triumph of the Redeemer's reign. It may be urged against this restriction that the address is prefaced (ver. 21) by an expression similar to that by which the Messianic promises in vers. 6–9 were introduced. There is this distinction, however, among others, between the two predictions. In the former the discourse relates to the Temple as representing the Church of God in its perpetual and ever-increasing glory and as the refuge of all nations; in the latter we have no indication of a reference to anything beyond the preservation of the theocracy so long as it should suit the divine purposes. The shaking of the heavens and the earth illustrates in both cases the violent commotions among the Gentiles through the divine power, but the result in the one was to be their ultimate conversion, in the other their destruction. Among Anglo-American commentators Henderson and Moore hold to the restricted and indirect Messianic sense.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The destinies of nations and their rulers are determined by their relations to the kingdom of God. When they subserve its advancement, they are not merely preserved by Him, but even become the objects of his special care (comp., *e. g.*, Is. xlv. 1–6). When they cease to do so they are shorn of their strength and fall. This is the highest and clearest lesson of history, written as plainly upon her records, as upon the pages of the Old Covenant.

2. The Jewish nation formed no exception to this divine law. The only respect in which it differed from other nations in this regard, was that it contained for a time the Church of God. This was its glory and its high trust. Its rulers, when faithful to the interests of God's kingdom committed to their keeping, were, as his chosen ministers, precious in his sight, and the objects of his peculiar care and never-failing help. Through the administration of such the nation prospered. And we know as well that it was through the unfaithfulness of the leaders of the Jewish people, that God's favor was withdrawn from them and they were blotted out from among the nations.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 22. Do righteousness and truth control our national life? If they do not we may expect national dissolution; perhaps the recurrence of fratricidal war.

Ver. 23. Are our rulers controlled in their every act by a regard for righteousness and truth? If they are, they will be guarded and guided by God for the nation's prosperity and true glory. If they are not, let them remember the denunciations of the prophets and of Christ himself against the unfaithful leaders of the Jews.

Moore: The best protection for any nation, the surest guarantee for its political existence, is a living, working Church in its midst.

Pressel: Even though we are not royal signet-rings, O God, but only little rings on thy eternal hand, how safely are we guarded!

THE

BOOK OF ZECHARIAH.

EXPOUNDED

BY

TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D. D.

ONE OF THE PASTORS OF THE COLLEGIATE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH,
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PREFACE.

THE general form of this commentary has been determined by that of the work of which it forms a part. While conforming to this rule, the author has endeavored to consider fairly every difficult question, to furnish a tolerable conspectus of the different views upon it, and wherever possible to state his own with the reasons upon which it rests. Reference has been had to the wants of ministers and students, and it is hoped that they will be able to find in these pages at least a convenient summary of the present state of critical and exegetical opinion upon this most important of the post-exile prophets. The author has done the best that he could in the limited time allowed him, but feels painfully that he has fallen far short of his own ideal. The work, such as it is, he humbly commends to the favor of Him without whose blessing nothing is either good or useful. A respectable scholar of the early part of the last century concludes the preface to his annotations upon Zechariah with words which the present writer cheerfully adopts for himself. "*Quantum ad nos, rimati sumus hanc prophetiam, verum pro modulo nostro. Omnino enim hic usu nobis venit, quod Paulus* 1 *Cor. xiii.* 6 *inculcat:* Ἐκ μέρους γινώσκομεν, καί ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν. . . . . *Interea, si quid lucis ex opella nostra lector acceperit, Deo acceptum id referat! sin aberasse ac nævos admisisse nos animadverterit, infirmitati nostræ condonet! Ingenue namque agnoscimus in exponendo tam sublimi vaticinio egisse nos non quantum debuimus, sed quantum potuimus*" (J. H. Michaelis, 1720.)

THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *The Name and Personal Relations of Zechariah.*

THE name Zechariah is given to more than twenty different persons in the Old Testament (see the enumeration in Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, p. 3610), but of these by far the most distinguished is the eleventh in order of the twelve minor prophets. The word זכריה is usually regarded as a compound of the abridged divine name יָה and the radicals זכר, but opinions vary as to the proper voweling of the latter word. Some regard it as a masculine noun = *man of* Jehovah; others as a feminine segholate = *memory of* Jehovah; but more commonly it is taken as a verb = Jehovah *remembers*. This corresponds to the usual method in which יָה is compounded with other words in order to form a proper name. Some of the older expositors (Jerome, Abarbanel), and a few of the moderns (Neumann, Schlier), endeavor to trace a connection between the Prophet's name and the contents of his utterances, but such a notion is forbidden by the frequency of its occurrence elsewhere, and by the fact that there is no prophet to whose words such a name would not equally apply. He describes himself as "the son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo," which phrases cannot be taken appositionally (LXX., Jerome, Cyril), but according to all genealogical usage denote that our Prophet was the son of the former and grandson of the latter. It is no objection to this view that in Ezra v. 1, vi. 14, he is called the son of Iddo, because in Scripture it is by no means unprecedented to give the name son to a grandson, or even a more remote descendant. Thus in the ninth chapter of 2 Kings, Jehu is styled in the fourteenth verse, "the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi," but in the twentieth verse, simply, "the son of Nimshi." Moreover, it is perfectly natural that the Prophet, when formally stating his own descent in the title of his prophecy, should recite the names of his father and grandfather, while the omission of the former in an historical narrative such as Ezra's, may be easily accounted for, either on the view that Berekiah had died young, or that Iddo was the more distinguished person and perhaps generally recognized as the head of the family, which appears to be a fair inference from Neh. xii. 1, 4–8. In this passage he is stated to have been one of "the heads of the priests and of their brethren," who came up from Babylon with Zerubbabel, and he is said (ver. 16) to have had a son named Zechariah, in the time of Joiakim, the successor of Joshua in the office of high priest. Hence we may conclude that Zechariah — owing possibly to the death of his father — became the immediate representative of the family after Iddo. He was, therefore, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, a Priest as well as a Prophet. As his grandfather was still in active service in the time of Joshua, Zechariah must have been quite young at that time, a fact which is indicated also by the

address made to him in one of the visions (ii. 4), "Run, speak to that young man." He was therefore born in Babylon, and came up with the first company of exiles who returned to Palestine. This fact of itself disposes of the fables of Epiphanius and others that he was a man of advanced age at the time of the return, and had distinguished himself by various wonders and prophecies in Babylon (see the citations in Köhler, *Einl.*). Similar patristic traditions as to his death and his burial by the side of Haggai, near Jerusalem, have no historical value. The later Jewish accounts that he was a member of the Great Synagogue and took an active part in providing for the liturgical service of the Second Temple, are probable enough in themselves, but cannot be certainly authenticated. The LXX. ascribe to him the composition of Ps. cxxxvii., cxxxviii., and to him and Haggai, that of Ps. cxlv.–cxlviii., in some of which ascriptions the Peshito and the Vulgate agree. There seems to be no means at the present day of determining how far any of these are to be credited. "The triumphant *Hallelujuh* with which many of these Psalms open, was supposed to be characteristic of those which were first chanted in the Second Temple, and came with an emphasis of meaning from the lips of those who had been restored to their native land. The allusions, moreover, with which these Psalms abound, as well as their place in the Psalter, leave us in no doubt as to the time when they were composed, and lend confirmation to the tradition respecting their authorship" (Smith's *Dict. of Bible*, p. 3599).

§ 2. *The Historical Background of his Prophecy.*

This is plainly determined by the book itself. Zechariah's first address, one which is on its face introductory, is dated in the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, which is two months after the first prophecy of Haggai (i. 1). The two prophets, therefore, were for a time contemporary, and acted in concert in the commencement of their labors so far as concerned their first object, namely, the rebuilding of the Temple. In this Haggai led the way, and then left the work to the younger man, who, however, by no means confined his prophetic activity to this narrow scope.

The restoration of the Temple had been a matter of great and pressing interest to the company of 50,000 who came up from Babylon under the summons of Cyrus in the year 536 B. C., and reoccupied the land of their fathers. They at once began to collect materials and workmen, and in the second month of the following year laid the foundation of the house with mingled joy and grief (Ezra iii. 11–13). But they were not suffered to proceed in quiet. Their neighbors, the descendants of the people whom Esar-haddon had settled in Samaria, asked permission to join in the enterprise, but were indignantly rejected. In consequence they exerted themselves in opposition, both by throwing obstacles in the way on the spot and by hiring influential counsellors at the Persian court. They were successful even during the life of Cyrus (Ezra iv. 5), but in the reign of Gomates, the pseudo-Smerdis, obtained a decree absolutely prohibiting the further prosecution of the work. In consequence the whole enterprise lay in abeyance for a period of nearly fourteen years. But in the year 521 B. C., Darius, the son of Hystaspes, ascended the throne. Immediately the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, inferring that the prohibitory decree of the preceding king ceased at his death, incited their countrymen to resume the work. They did so under the lead of Zerubbabel and Joshua, but were again interrupted, not however by their malignant neighbors, but by Tatnai, the Persian governor west of the Euphrates, who simply as a matter of administration inquired into the origin and object of the movement. The consequence was a written reference to the central government at Babylon. A search in the records at Ecbatana brought to light the original decree of Cyrus ordering the restoration of the Jews and their worship. This, Darius cordially renewed and confirmed in the second year of his reign, so that thenceforth there was no longer any outward difficulty in the way.

But it is very evident from the language of Haggai that a great change had occurred in the views and feelings of the people. Their former zeal for divine worship had almost disappeared. They became engrossed in the work of repairing their private fortunes and securing the comforts of life. They accepted the hindrances in the way of work upon the Temple as providential indications that they were not to resume it, and very energetic appeals and remonstrances were required to rouse them from their apathy, and engage them with becoming diligence and constancy in the enterprise. These efforts of the two prophets were successful, and the building was finished in the sixth year of Darius (B. C. 515), twenty-

one years after its commencement. All the notes of time given in Zechariah (i. 1–7; vii. 1) fall within the period occupied in labor upon the Temple, but it does not seem to follow as a necessary consequence that all his earlier prophecies are to be understood as mainly intended to secure this consummation. The Temple was to the Jews both an indispensable means of worship and the one great symbol of their faith; and indifference to its existence or progress was a sure token of spiritual declension. The Prophet therefore has a constant reference, direct or indirect, to this work, but he by no means confines himself to it. His utterances take in the whole character and condition of the covenant people, their present dangers and discouragements, their tendencies to formalism and self-deception, their relations to the surrounding heathen and their influence upon the future prospects of the world. His historical position in the second–fourth years of Darius merely furnishes the background for the delineations he presents of the present and coming fortunes of the kingdom of God. To insist, as some recent writers do, upon limiting the scope of the night visions to the Prophet's own age, greatly embarrasses the interpretation, and at the same time disregards what is one of the characteristic features of all Scripture prophecy, namely, that it constantly brings together the near and the remote, deals in generic statements, and prefers a logical to a chronological connection. The sacred writers of course met the wants of their contemporaries; but the Spirit that was in them gave their words a force and bearing which passed far beyond the immediate present.

§ 3. *The Style and Form of the Book.*

From the earliest period complaint has been made of the obscurity of the Prophet. Hengstenberg quotes from Abarbanel, "The prophecies of Zechariah are so obscure that no expositors however skilled have found their hands (Ps. lxxvi. 5) in the explanation," and from Jarchi, "the prophecy is very abstruse, for it contains visions resembling dreams which want interpreting; and we shall never be able to discover the true interpretation until the teacher of righteousness (cf. Joel ii. 23 marg.) arrives." The same thing had been said long before these Jewish expositors by Jerome, who after pronouncing the first part very obscure, begins his comment on the second with these words, "*Ab obscuris ad obscuriora transimus, et cum Moyse ingredimur in nubem et caliginem. Abyssus abyssum invocat in voce cataractarum Dei, et gyrans gyrando vadit spiritus et in circulos suos revertitur: Labyrinthios patimur errores et Christi cæca regimus filo vestigia.*" So Lowth speaks of him as the Prophet "who of all is perhaps the most obscure." To the same effect speak many of the rationalistic expositors. And although some of these complaints may be traced to subjective causes as, *e. g.*, the extreme difficulty a Jew would find in understanding any writing which apparently describes a suffering Messiah, or the unwillingness of one who denies the possibility of prophecy in the strict sense of the word, to see or admit what manifestly is a prediction of a remotely future event; yet it is undeniable that there are passages which in themselves are hard to be understood. This is owing mainly to the predominance of symbolical and figurative language, and occasionally to the brevity and conciseness of the statements. Yet, as Vitringa observes, this fact ought not to frighten any one who is eager for the truth, since there is a sense, even if hidden, which relates to the most important things; and this should only stimulate one's endeavors. Moreover, as Hengstenberg suggests, there are two considerations which greatly aid the interpreter of Zechariah. One is that he leans so much upon his predecessors prior to the Captivity, and hence much light is gained from parallel passages. The other lies in his being a Prophet of the restoration. Of course one element of uncertainty which is found in the earlier Prophets here ceases. A good deal of what was future to them is to Zechariah either past or present, and it is not possible to explain any of his glowing delineations of a future state of deliverance and enlargement as fulfilled in the return from Babylon. The contraction of the possible field of vision lessens the liability to err.

Zechariah delivers his oracles partly in direct prophetic speech, partly in the relation of visions, and partly in the description of symbolical acts (chaps. vi., xi). The occurrence of the two latter forms has been attributed to his Chaldaic education, and to the influence of Babylonian usages and doctrines upon his mind. This is far-fetched and needless. Every peculiarity may be sufficiently accounted for by reference to the older Prophets with whom he was familiar, especially Jeremiah and Daniel. The occurrence of symbolic visions cannot be due to the influences of the exile, for such visions are found in Amos (vii.–ix.) who

lived long before that period, and are not found in Haggai, who was Zechariah's contemporary. In respect to our Prophet's doctrine of angels, good or bad, equally groundless is the view which makes him a debtor to Mesopotamian or Persian theology. As this point will be found treated at some length in a subsequent section (§ 7), only a few words need be added here. As to good angels in general, and the angel of the Lord in particular, the Book of Genesis furnished him with accepted models; and as to Satan, his existence is found clearly set forth in the Book of Job, which no sober interpreter has ever assigned to a later date than the Solomonic era. Zechariah, therefore, reveals no "Babylonian-Persian coloring" in his writings. The particulars which have been cited as showing such a coloring are either distinctively Israelitish (*e. g.*, the number seven, iii. 9), or else manifestly general (*e. g.*, the company of riders, i. 8). On the contrary there is every indication that his culture was native and national. Not only does he expressly refer to the former Prophets (i. 4–6; vii. 7–12) but borrows their phraseology, as in *Be silent all flesh*, etc., ii. 13, cf. Hab. ii. 20; *a brand plucked*, etc., iii. 2, cf. Amos iv. 11; *quiet my spirit*, vi. 8, cf. Ez. v. 13; מֵעֹבֵר וּמִשָּׁב, vii. 14, ix. 8, cf. Ez. xxxv. 7; *fear not*, etc., viii. 13, cf. Zeph. iii. 16; *let us go speedily*, etc., viii. 21, cf. Is. ii. 3; *shall take hold*, etc., viii. 23, cf. Is. iv. 1. Other references may be seen by comparing i. 12 with Jer. xxv. 11, 12; ii. 8 with Is. xlix. 20; iii. 8 and vi. 12 with Is. liii. 2 and xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15, iii. 10 with Micah iv. 4; vi. 13 with Ps. cx. 4; viii. 4 with Is. lxv. 19, 20; viii. 19 with Jer. xxxi. 13; xii. 1 with Is. xlii. 5; li. 13.

Henderson speaks of his prose as "diffuse, uniform, and repetitious," which is far too sweeping a charge. If by it he refers to the reiteration of "Ye shall know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me" in ch. ii., or of "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts" in ch. viii., it may be said that if one considers what an impression is thus made as to the Prophet's consciousness of his inspiration and the certainty of the declarations he utters, these will not be deemed "vain repetitions." I agree with Pressel that he must have no eyes who does not see and admire the grandeur of the night visions, and he no ears who does not hear the heavy tread of the last six chapters. Manifest as is the dependence of Zechariah upon his predecessors in the particulars before mentioned, he yet has a marked individuality both in thought and expression, *e. g.*, God's protection of Jerusalem as a wall of fire round about and glory within (ii. 5); the dramatic scene of Joshua and Satan before the angel of the Lord (iii. 1, 2); the poetic delineation of the resistless Spirit (iv. 7); the development of the idea in the word Branch (iii. 8; vi. 12); the exquisite picture of peace and prosperity (viii. 4, 5); the representation of Judah as a bow which the Lord bends and Ephraim the arrow fitted on the string (ix. 13); the energy in describing the wretchedness of the flock of slaughter in xi. 5; the striking comparisons in xii. 8–10; the amazing conception in the phrase "fellow of Jehovah" (xiii. 7); or, the picturesque method of setting forth universal holiness in xiv. 20, 21.

The Hebrew of Zechariah is now admitted to be pure and remarkably free from Chaldaisms. There are some orthographic peculiarities, such as דָּוִיד for דָּוִד (xii. 7, 8, 10). Some singular uses of words, as אַחַת for the indefinite article (v. 7), and some unusual constructions, as יוֹשֶׁבֶת בַּת־בָּבֶל, or the unusual position of אֵת in vii. 7, viii. 17, cf. Haggai ii. 5; but in the main the language corresponds to that of the earlier models, and exhibits far fewer traces of linguistic decay than we should expect.

§ 4. *The Messianic Predictions.*

It is an old remark that Zechariah is distinguished for his insight into the moral and spiritual meaning of the Mosaic economy, and his illustration of the Apostle's statement that the law is a schoolmaster unto Christ. A great largeness and clearness of view is apparent even on a cursory inspection of his writings. His rebuke of formal fasting in ch. vii. is not nearly so eloquent as Isaiah's treatment of the same theme in the fifty-eighth chapter of his prophecies, but it is every way as decided and vigorous. The universality of the coming dispensation is suggested again and again. It is not individuals merely, but many nations and far-off peoples who are to be joined unto the Lord. The old boundaries of the covenant people are to be enlarged until they become coextensive with the limits of the habitable earth. See ii. 11; vi. 15; viii. 20–23; ix. 10; xiv. 9–16. The sacred inscription upon the tiara of the high priest, HOLINESS TO THE LORD, which proclaimed his entire

consecration to the sacerdotal function, Zechariah sees engraved hereafter even upon the bells of the horses in token of the fact that all believers are to become a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and that, to such a degree that even the most ordinary functions of life shall be discharged in a religious spirit. (See xiv. 20.) Again, the reconstruction of the material Temple upon its old site is so far from satisfying his enlarged views that he passes at once to the true house of God, the Temple not made with hands, the glorious structure composed of living stones, built and inhabited by the Spirit of the living God. (See vi. 13; iv. 6). The golden candelabrum of the Tabernacle is to him not a mere ornament however brilliant, but the resplendent type of the city of God, precious to Jehovah as the apple of his eye, and shining from afar like a city set upon a hill, the means of its illumination being provided from ever fresh and imperishable sources. (See iv. 1–12.) Himself a member of the priestly order, he looks forward to the time when the patriarchal type of Melchizedek shall be realized in the combination of regal and sacerdotal functions in one person. Not even the evangelical Prophet presents this instructive and consolatory thought with the clearness and emphasis of Zechariah. (See iv. 13, 14; vi. 13.) Yet again, the union of the highest doctrines of grace with the most stringent ethical claims is given in a manner worthy of Paul. Over and over is it asserted that the Lord has chosen Jerusalem (i. 17; ii. 12; iii. 2), a fact which is made the sole ground of her preservation, enlargement, and defense against all foes, visible and invisible; and yet he who asserts this sees between heaven and earth the flying roll inscribed with curses against all transgressors (v. 2–4), and also lays down with sharp precision the immutable laws of justice, goodness, and truth, founded upon the recognition of man's relations to his fellow-man, and their common relation to the one Maker and Father of all (vii. 8–10; viii. 16, 17). Once more, the fine conception of a joint observance of the Feast of Tabernacles by all families of the earth, represents the final issue of the world's great pilgrimage, when the race of man, having concluded its march through the wilderness of error and trial, shall gratefully record the divine goodness in the new Exodus, and keep a perpetual memorial of this distinguishing mercy (xiv. 16).

But besides these general allusions and references to the coming dispensation, there are specific and unquestionable predictions of the one great person through whom they were to be accomplished. These are given not in a continuous succession, but, just as they were by the former Prophets, at different times, and in various relations according to the circumstances and object of the Prophet on any particular occasion. Each prediction answered a definite purpose when it was uttered, and the whole together serve admirably to supplement and complete the Messianic literature of the preëxile period. These specific references are more frequent and emphatic than in any of Zechariah's predecessors except Isaiah. They are six in number.

1. The first one occurs in ch. iii. 8, where Zechariah appropriates a name already used by Isaiah (iv. 2) and by Jeremiah (xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15) for the same purpose — BRANCH. Jehovah declares that he will bring forth his servant, thus entitled, and, in close connection with this promise, asserts that the iniquity of the land will be removed in one day.

2. In ch. vi. 12, 13, the same promise is resumed and enlarged. The man whose name is BRANCH. He will start from a lowly origin and build the Temple of Jehovah, not the mere material structure, but the true spiritual Temple composed of living stones. Not only will He sit in majesty upon a throne, but be a priest upon his throne, uniting in Himself the two distinct offices and so securing the perfect discharge of the functions of both.

3. In ch. ix. 9, 10, the King reappears. His dominion is peaceful but universal, and shouts of triumph hail his coming. Yet that coming is marked by signs of lowliness and sorrow. The passage presents the same combination so often found in Isaiah, of the absence of external signs of majesty with the reality of a world-wide power and influence.

4. The next Messianic reference is found in the obscure and difficult eleventh chapter, where (vers. 12, 13) the wages of the good shepherd are estimated at the contemptuous sum of thirty pieces of silver. "A goodly price," says Jehovah, with certainly not unbecoming irony, "at which I was prized of them." The New Testament (Matt. xxvii. 9, 10) leaves no doubt that here is a designed allusion to the price of the fearful treason of Judas and the subsequent disposal of the wages of unrighteousness.

5. In ch. xii. 10 is a still more remarkable delineation of the suffering Messiah, and a vivid statement of the connection between his death and the kindling of an earnest and genuine repentance in those who look upon Him as one whom *they* have pierced. It was fulfilled at Pentecost, and has been illustrated in the effects of the preaching of the cross

ever since. The repentance thus wrought is not ineffectual, but results in forgiveness and holiness, as is shown in xiii. 1, which is the conclusion of the passage commencing at the tenth verse of the previous chapter.

6. The last distinct reference to the coming Saviour (xiii. 7), is perhaps the most striking in the entire range of prophecy. In it Jehovah is represented as calling upon the sword to awake against the man who is his fellow, where we are confronted with the two mysteries; that one sustaining such a relation should be subjected to such a doom, and that the Being who calls for and causes it, is Jehovah with whom he is so intimately united. The only explanation lies in the historical statement of the Evangelist,— God so loved the world that He gave his only-begotton Son. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Thus is apparent the gradual progress of the disclosure. First, Jehovah's lowly servant, Branch; then that servant as priest and king building Jehovah's Temple; thirdly, as a meek and peaceful, but universal monarch; fourthly, a Shepherd, scorned, rejected, betrayed, and (by implication) slain; fifthly, his pierced form seen by faith a means of deep and general repentance attended by pardon and conversion; and lastly, the Fellow of Jehovah smitten by Jehovah himself, at once the redeemer and the pattern of his flock.

Dr. Lange (*Genesis*, p. 40) finds in ch. x. 11 a representation of Christ as going before his returning people through the sea of sorrow, beating down the waves of the sea. But this is gained only by an arbitrary interpretation, at war with the connection, unsustained by usage and scarcely admissible even upon the theory of accommodation.

§ 5. *The Contents of the Book.*

It is very obvious on even a cursory inspection, that the book consists of two parts, the former of which (chaps. i.–viii.) contains mention of the dates at which its various portions were communicated, while the latter (chaps. ix.–xiv.) contains no dates at all. There are other and even more important points of difference, as will presently be seen, but this one is enough to indicate the occurrence of a break in the stream of prophetic utterance; the first part having been set forth in the earlier years of Zechariah's activity, even before the completion of the Temple; the latter on the contrary having been delayed for several, possibly many years, as there is no internal indication in either its structure or its substance, that it was called forth by any particular juncture of circumstances in the condition of the people. The analogy of the Book of Isaiah suggests the opinion that the Prophet, having in the former part of his book communicated the revelations which bore immediately upon the duties and interest of his countrymen at the time, in the latter took a wider range, and set forth the future destiny of the Church in its lights and shades, in such a form as to be of equal benefit at all times and to all classes.

The First Part.

This is determined by the several dates to consist of three distinct prophetic utterances.

I. Chap. i. 1–6. These verses contain an introduction in the form of a solemn admonition enforced by an appeal to the experience of the fathers, who not only felt but acknowledged that Jehovah's threatenings were not a vain thing but a formidable reality. The date is the eighth month of the second year of Darius, B. C. 515.

II. Chaps. i. 7–vi. 15. Eight Night-visions followed by an Appendix, namely:

1. The Man among the Myrtles, or Successful Intercession for the Covenant people (ch. i. 7–17).
2. The Four Horns and Four Smiths, or an Adequate Defender against every Assailant (ch. i. 18–21).
3. The Man with the Measuring Line, or the Enlargement and Security of the People of God (ch. ii.).
4. Joshua the High Priest before the Angel of Jehovah, or the Forgiveness of Sin and the Coming of the Branch (ch. iii.).
5. The Candlestick with the two Olive Trees, or the Positive Communication of God's Spirit and Grace (ch. iv).
6. The Flying Roll, or the Destroying Curse upon all Sinners (ch. v. 1–4).
7. The Woman in the Ephah, or the Permanent Exile of the Wicked (ch. v. 5–11).

8. The Four Chariots, or Jehovah's Judgments upon the Heathen (ch. vi. 1–8).

Appendix. This recites a symbolical action, the Crowning of Joshua, the High-priest, or the Functions of the Priest-King whose name is BRANCH. The date of the whole series is the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month of the second year of Darius, B. C. 515.

III. Chaps. vii. and viii. An answer to the inquiry of the People whether they should continue to observe the annual fasts which commemorated special calamities in their former experience. The Prophet first (ch. vii.) rebukes their formalism and recounts the sins and sorrows of their fathers; and then (ch. viii.) promises such blessings as will change their fasts into festivals and attract even the heathen to seek their fellowship. The prophecy was uttered in the fourth day of the ninth month of the fourth year of Darius, B. C. 517, which is the last date mentioned in the book.

THE SECOND PART.

This, as has been said, bears no date, and may have been, and probably was, delivered long after what is contained in the preceding chapters. It is divided into two oracles by the titles which head respectively chaps. ix. and xii. The general theme is the Future Destiny of the Covenant People.

I. *The First Burden* (chaps. ix.–xi.).

This seems to outline the course of God's providence toward his people as far as the time of our Saviour.

1. Judgment upon the Land of Hadrach (ix. 1–8), or the Syrian Conquests of Alexander the Great.
2. Zion's King of Peace (ix. 9, 10). Plainly Messianic.
3. Victory over the Sons of Javan (ix. 11–17), or the triumphs of the Maccabees.
4. Further Blessings of the Covenant People (ch. x.). Their gradual increase in means and numbers under native rulers.
5. The Rejection of the Good Shepherd (ch. xi.). A striking delineation of our Lord's treatment by his own people.

II. *The Second Burden* (chaps. xii.–xiv.).

This carries forward the outlook upon the future even to the time of the end.

1. Israel's Victory over Trials (xii. 1–9), or the Triumph of the early Church over persecuting Foes.
2. Repentance and Conversion (xii. 10; xiii. 1), or the Power of Christ's Death to awaken and renew.
3. The Fruits of Penitence (xiii. 2–6), as shown in the abolition of false worship and false prophecy which stand for all forms of sin.
4. The Sword against the Shepherd and his Flock (xiii. 7–9), or Christ is smitten by his Father, and his People suffer also.
5. Final Conflict and Triumph of God's Kingdom (ch. xiv.), or a General Survey of the checkered course from beginning to end.

§ 6. *The Genuineness of the Second Part.*

This is in some respects the most interesting and important question pertaining to the book, and needs to be considered at some length.

1. *The History of the Assault.* This is comparatively of late date. The question seems never to have been stirred until the middle of the seventeenth century. The first to raise a doubt was the learned and pious Jos. Mede in the *Fragmenta Sacra* appended to his *Dissert. Eccles. Triga*, London, 1653. This was suggested to him by the citation in Matt. (xxvii. 9, 10), which the Evangelist attributes to Jeremiah, whence he concluded that "the Jews had not rightly attributed these chapters to Zechariah;" and he was further confirmed in this opinion by the contents of the chapters, some of which he thought required an earlier date than the exile, and others were not suitable to Zechariah's position and object. Mede was followed in this view by Hammond, 1681; Rich. Kidder, *Demon. of the Messiah*, 1700; Whiston, 1722; Archbishop Newcome, *Imp. Version*, etc., 1785; to all of whom Blayney made what Hengstenberg calls "an admirable reply," in his work on *Zechariah*, Oxford, 1797. The controversy was first awakened in Germany by B. G. Flügge, in an anonymous work published in 1784, in which he maintained that the second part consisted of nine dis-

tinct prophecies, delivered before the exile. After him Eichhorn, Corrodi, Paulus, and Vatke went to the opposite extreme and assigned its origin to a writer living in the time of Alexander the Great. The greater part of the hostile critics (Bertholdt, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Hitzig, Knobel, Maurer, Ewald, Bleek, Bunsen, Von Ortenberg, Pressel) followed in the wake of Mede and Newcome, and maintained, with however many variations among themselves, that the six chapters in question dated from a period prior to the Captivity. Some (Davidson and Pressel) deem the whole the work of one author, probably the Zechariah mentioned Is. viii. 2, who lived in the reign of Ahaz. Others (Knobel, Bunsen, *et al.*) assign chaps. xii.–xiv. (to which Ewald excepts xiii. 7–9, which he thinks misplaced where it is) to a later unknown author, probably a contemporary of Jeremiah; and thus they make two ante-exile composers of the second part. The traditional view of one book and one author has been maintained by Carpzov, Beckhaus, Jahn, Koster, Hengstenberg, De Wette, (in the later editions of his *Einleitung*), Umbreit, Hävernick, Keil, Stahelin, V. Hoffman, Neumann, Kliefoth, Köhler, Reinke, *et al.*; and in England by Henderson, Wordsworth, and Pusey, while Jno. Pye Smith and Davidson hold to the preëxile authorship.

2. *The Grounds of Objection to the Genuineness.* These have been already suggested. (*a.*) The first and most important is the New Testament authority as apparently given by Matthew (xxvii. 9, 10), where the Evangelist attributes to Jeremiah what is unquestionably a citation from Zech. xi. 12. Various readings are found in some MSS. and VSS., but these are such as in all probability sprang from a desire to make the Gospel conform to the fact. (*b.*) Another ground is sought in the contents of the six chapters, *e. g.* Mede argues that one of the chapters contains a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem which was fulfilled by Titus, and this was by no means suitable to the object of Zechariah, whose mission was only to console and to encourage. Again, Ephraim and Judah are spoken of together as if both were still existing as distinct kingdoms, which they never were after the exile. Assyria and Egypt are mentioned as formidable powers which at that time they were not, Persia having absorbed the former and subdued the latter. So also are Phœnicia, Damascus, and Philistia represented as important foes, when their power had long been broken. Complaints are made of false prophets and idolatry, of neither of which is any trace found after the Captivity. The delineation of the Messiah in the second part, as rejected and put to death, is inconsistent with those statements in the first, which represent Him as glorious and blessed. (*c.*) A third objection is drawn from the alleged contrast of style between the parts. The first is prosaic and poor, the second is poetic and forcible, so that the difference is manifest. The one is full of visions, and speaks much of angels and also of Satan, of all of which there is scarcely a trace in the other. Certain characteristic phrases, "The word of Jehovah came," "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts," etc., found in the first eight chapters, do not occur at all in the last six, while on the other hand "in that day" occurs frequently in the latter, but not once in the former. A convenient summary of these objections may be found in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, pp. 3603, 3609.

3. *The Argument for the Traditional View.* (*a*) Here it may be remarked, first that the opinion which refers the origin of the controverted chapters to the time of Alexander or of the Maccabees, is now generally abandoned, and by the later writers on the other side is not deemed worthy of reply. Indeed it never rested upon anything but the dogmatic prejudice that the Prophets could prophecy only of that which lay in their own time, and could be foreknown by their own unaided faculties. Eichhorn frankly confessed that all other arguments were unsatisfactory. (*b.*) The degree of variation among the objectors themselves, casts suspicion upon their views. Men of equal learning, insight, and candor differ alike upon the authorship they suggest and the grounds upon which they defend it. Some make one writer, others make two; one rests mainly upon the text in Matthew, another is guided by the variations in matter and tone between the first part and the second, another makes much of the variations in style. It seems then that as soon as we leave the traditional view we are all at sea, with no certain criteria of judgment, and liable to be borne hither and thither by mere subjective influences. (*c.*) We have no record of any other Zechariah who might be presumed to have written what was afterwards confounded with the genuine writings of the son of Iddo. Mention is made (Is. viii. 2) of a man bearing this name, but it is only as a "faithful witness," without the least indication that he bore the prophetic character or discharged the prophetic office; and later, another is spoken of (2 Chron. xxvi. 5) who was a trusted counsellor of King Uzziah, but this man, even if the text be correct (of which there is serious doubt), while he "understood the sight of God," yet did not stand

in the prophetic order and is not credited with any prophetic utterances, much less writings, for popular edification. Nothing then but a vigorous exercise of the imagination can produce another Zechariah whose compositions might by mistake have been appended to those of the *post-exilium* Prophet. (*d.*) The theory of another author or authors implies that there was a mistake made by the framers of the present Canon of the Old Testament. It is quite certain that they intended all the fourteen chapters of Zechariah to be regarded as the work of one and the same person. Did they err? We may admit, as Pressel claims, the paucity of our knowledge as to the time of the compilation of the Canon, and the men by whom it was done; nor can we urge with Hengstenberg that Zechariah lived in the same age with the collectors of the Canon, which may or may not have been the case. But it is certain that the Canon was completed before the version of the Septuagint was made, *i. e.*, in the first half of the third century before Christ, and its compilers had abundant opportunity to satisfy themselves as to the claims of the different classes of writings upon which they adjudicated. Some they admitted; others they rejected; and their judgment stands to-day accredited by the highest authority, — that of our Lord and his Apostles. We know from Josephus and other sources what Scriptures they were upon which the blessed Saviour placed his *imprimatur*. They included the Δωδεκαπρόφητον, just as it stands, and in this, the Book of Zechariah just as it stands. Would he have sanctioned such an error as is claimed to exist? Is it reasonable to think that the Providence which confessedly watched so carefully over the sacred writings in all other respects would have failed just here? The cases which Mede cites are not parallel. He speaks of Agur's prayer being included in the Book of Proverbs of Solomon, and of liturgical compositions by other authors being included in what are called the Psalms of David. But in both these cases the rule was applied, *a fortiori nomen fit;* and besides, the added portions were for the most part marked with the names of their respective authors. In Zechariah nothing of the kind is seen. Not a hint of divided authorship is given, nor was even the thought of such a thing suggested, until twenty centuries had rolled away. Nor is there a single ascertained instance in the older portions of the Scriptures, in which pieces by different authors are collected into one book and ascribed to one and the same author.

(*e.*) As to the passage in Matthew's gospel, it may be truly said that the Evangelist would hardly be likely to make a correction of the Jewish Canon in this indirect manner, without giving some intimation to that effect. "The uniform reference of these chapters to Zechariah in the Jewish Canon is much more difficult to account for if he did not write them, than the verse in Matthew is, if he did" (T. V. Moore). Moreover, Matthew's statement gives no countenance to those who claim an early Zechariah, for he explicitly mentions Jeremiah, and they who plead his authority must take it as it stands, and not bend it to suit their own purposes. So far then as the present argument is concerned, we might dismiss this citation as having no bearing upon the question of an earlier or later *Zechariah*. For a full statement of the question the reader is referred to Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, 3609, and to Lange's *Comm. on Matthew, l. c.* In my own view, the citation is not to be explained as an error of memory, which is inconsistent with the true doctrine of the inspiration of the sacred penmen; nor as a textual error, for the existing text is completely established; nor as a quotation from a lost book of Jeremiah (Origen), or an apocryphal book of his (Jerome, Eichhorn), or one of his oral statements (Calovius), or from a genuine work of Jeremiah from which the Jews have expunged this passage (Eusebius), since all of these suppositions are as destitute of probability as they are of proof; nor by the theory that the Evangelist, fusing two passages together, one from Jeremiah and another from Zechariah, names the joint product from the older Prophet (Grotius, Hengstenberg), for this is extremely artificial and unlikely; nor by the claim that the name Jeremiah was purposely substituted for that of Zechariah in order to teach us that all prophecies proceed from one Spirit, and that the Prophets are merely channels, not sources, of the Divine truth (Wordsworth), for this would create far greater difficulties than it removes, by undermining all confidence in any specific quotations. The only remaining view is that of Scrivener and Lightfoot, that the Book of Jeremiah, being actually arranged by the Jews as the first of all the Prophets (Bava Bathra), gave its name to the whole body of their writings, and that thus Matthew was justified in naming his quotation as he did. If this be not acceptable, all we can do is to assume an error on the part of one of the earliest transcribers, or to say with Calvin, *Me nescire fateor nec anxie laboro.* But however this citation may be explained, or even if it be given up as inexplicable, it cannot be used to prove that the authorship of the second part

of Zechariah was an open question in the time of the Apostles. For if that had been the case we should have had some other evidence of the fact. Especially, since Matthew makes two other quotations from Zechariah (xxi. 5 and xxvi. 31), but in both cases follows his usual method of quoting without name; in one, saying, "which was spoken by the Prophet," in the other, simply "it is written." But if he had really held that the second part of Zechariah, although inspired and canonical, was not attributed to its true author, would he not have said so in these passages as well as in xxvii. 9?

(*f.*) As to the contents of the chapters in question the objections spring from a misapprehension of their exegetical meaning. Many of these will be considered as they arise in the course of the exposition, but a few remarks may be made here. The mention of Ephraim by no means presupposes the distinct existence of the northern kingdom. That name is used to designate a part of the existing population just as the corresponding term Israel is employed by Malachi (ii. 11), whom no one denies to be a post-exile Prophet. Assyria and Egypt in like manner are brought forward as natural and convenient representatives of the heathen foes of the covenant people. Phœnicia and the other kingdoms on the coast line of Palestine, although not flourishing and independent, were certainly in existence in Zechariah's time, and suffered under the victorious march of Alexander which our Prophet predicts. The difficulty about the reference to false Prophets and idolatry is diluted by the prophetic peculiarity of representing the future under the forms of the past. As to the Messianic predictions in the second part, they are a pledge of its genuineness, sustaining as they do the same relation to the Messianic allusions in the first part, as Isaiah's later predictions on the same theme (xlix., liii.) do to his earlier writings (ii., ix., xi.). When Zechariah's main object was to encourage the people in carrying forward the Temple, he naturally gave special prominence to the brighter side of the Messianic picture; but afterwards when his scope was larger, he brought in the more developed thought of one who triumphs through suffering. (*g.*) In xii. 11 there is an undeniable allusion to the death of Josiah in the valley of Megiddo, which is fatal to the assumption that the second part was composed in the time of Ahaz. Nor can this be successfully eluded by assigning chaps. ix.–xi. to one author, and chaps. xii.–xiv. to another, for the two "burdens" are intimately connected by their common description of the people as a flock, and of their leaders as shepherds, and by the dependence of xiii. 7 upon xi. 11. But if the six chapters form one whole, how could they have been uttered in the days of Jeremiah and yet have attained no recognition at his hand?

(*h.*) As to the alleged differences of style, Pressel, himself an opponent of the genuineness, says with some sharpness that the man who professes to see such a contrast that he can say of one part that it is post-exile Hebrew, and of the other that it is ante-exile Hebrew, must have an ear fine enough to hear the grass when it grows! Still it must be admitted that there are some differences; yet these are not more than may be easily accounted for by the difference of age and of aim in the author. Zechariah (ii. 4) was a young man when he composed the first part, and was possibly quite advanced when he composed the second. The first part is in large measure descriptive, the second wholly prophetic; and there was room in the latter for an elevation and grandeur which were not called for before. It surely is not an accepted canon of criticism that because an author writes at one time in a certain style, he must always use the same in any subsequent work. This reasoning would (as T. V. Moore says) make us affirm that Burke could not be the author of the *Reflections on the French Revolution*, because he wrote the *Treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful*, which is as simple and subdued as the former is impassioned and brilliant. Moreover, it is worthy of remark that the first part, which on all sides is admitted to be of post-exile origin, presents some great diversities of conception and expression. What can be more unlike the bold and startling symbolism of the night visions than the plain didactic utterances contained in the two chapters (vii. and viii.) which follow them? Yet no one has suggested a different author here. Why then should we think of one when we come to the second part, where the variation is certainly no greater? A word may be added respecting the dependence of Zechariah upon the earlier Prophets (see the citations and references in § 3) as evidence of his posteriority. It is true that Köhler, himself a defender of the genuineness, declines to use this argument, saying that it is impossible to decide in such cases which is the original source of the words, phrases, and images used. But the point is well taken by Stahelin, that it is far more likely that one Prophet quoted from many than that many quoted

from one. Indeed, it was this consideration principally which led De Wette to change his opinion, so that after having delared for two authors of Zechariah in three editions of his Introduction, he returned to the traditionary view in the fourth.

(*i.*) The adverse theory claims that the compilers of the Canon found these six chapters either together or in parts, floating around as a part of the inspired literature of the nation and generally recognized as such, but without having the name of any author prefixed; and that by mistake they put them in connection with the acknowledged prophecies of Zechariah. Here, it may be urged in reply, is an exceedingly improbable supposition at the outset. All the prophetical writings of the Old Testament of which we have any knowledge state in each case at the beginning the name of the author. This is true of the twelve Minor Prophets, of the Books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and of the particular prophetic visions of Daniel (vii. 1; viii. 1; ix. 1, 2; x. 1). This was not the case with the histories of Scripture, for the obvious reason that these, whether because they were drawn from the archives of the nation, or because they bore intrinsic evidence of their correctness, did not require to be authenticated by the authors' names. But prophecy had its entire value in its divine inspiration, and its human author must furnish in his name and personality the evidence that he stood in such a relation to God as to be made by Him a channel of revelation. This then being the case, it is wholly unreasonable to suppose that an anonymous prophecy was current among the Jews at the time when the Canon was made. On the contrary we are justified in holding that had such a nameless work come before the compilers, they would have rejected it as on its face spurious.

(*j.*) The testimony of the Jews on this subject is unanimous. Not only the learned scribes in the days of Ezra and afterwards who compiled the Canon, but the schools of Hillel and Shammai who flourished in Jerusalem just before and after the time of our Lord, the great Jewish Seminaries of Tiberias and Babylon, the authors of the Targums, and the continuous series of learned Rabbins down to the Reformation, all with one consent, accept the Book of Zechariah just as it stands in the Old Testament as the product of one man, the contemporary of Haggai and Zerubbabel. Of the learning of these men there can be no question. They were as well able to judge questions of evidence, internal or external, as any modern critic. They were notorious for their extreme jealousy for the integrity of the sacred writings. Their absolute silence as to any diversity of authorship is wholly inexplicable, if the apparent indications of that fact have anything like the degree of strength and clearness which is claimed by the opponents of the traditional view.

Mr. Perowne, the author of the article on Zechariah in Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, concludes a review of the whole argument, with the remark, "It is not easy to say which way the weight of evidence preponderates." I cannot agree with this opinion. Of course it would be idle to say that there is no ground for suspecting the preëxile date of the chapters in question. Too many critics of various countries and of different shades of theological opinion, have agreed in adopting this view to warrant its contemptuous rejection. At the same time a careful review of the case justifies the immemorial historical tradition. No dates are given, because none were needed, the entire outlook being on the distant future. The author's name is not once mentioned; but the same is true of the later prophecies of Isaiah, the twenty-six brilliant chapters which close the book. The northern kingdom is not mentioned in the last three chapters, while it does occur in the three preceding; but if its mention in the latter has no historical significance, its omission in the former need have none. The efforts made to explain particular predictions by occurrences in Hebrew history prior to the Captivity, have totally failed, as *e. g.*, the conquest of the sea-coast (ix. 1–8), the victory over Javan (ix. 13–17), the feeding of the flock of slaughter (xi.), the general repentance (xii. 10–14), or the inward purity and universal ascendancy of Judah (xiv. 16–21). But most of these can be very satisfactorily shown to be fulfilled in the period between the restoration from Babylon and the founding of the Christian Church; and any others may safely be considered as belonging to the as yet unfulfilled purposes of the Most High. What then is there startling in the thought that Zechariah in the later years of life, under the guidance of the same inspiration which undeniably vouchsafed to him the night-visions, proceeded to record these two oracles or burdens sketching in outline the future fortunes of the people of God, exhibiting their struggles and triumphs, their sins and purification, and especially their Priest-king, not merely in his wide and peaceful reign, but also in the rejection, humiliation, and sacrifice by which that reign is procured? Then, since we

know that Jeremiah on one occasion by divine command (xxxvi. 2) reduced to writing all the prophecies of his preceding ministry, why might not Zechariah have done the same thing, making one complete record of all that the Lord had seen fit to reveal by him?

Furthermore, let the reader compare the course of thought in the eight night visions and their appendix with that of the second part, and he will hardly fail to see a surprising coincidence in the general scope, whatever may be the variations in detail. There are the same promises of increase and enlargement, of protection and security, of overthrow of foes, of removal of iniquity, of effusion of the Spirit, of the punishment of the incorrigible, and of the final ingathering of far-off peoples. This is apparent from a glance at the contents of the respective sections as given in § 5, but is still more evident upon a careful continuous reading of each part with the attention fixed upon the order of thought and its general expression. As to the development of the Messianic idea, the lowly and peaceful rider upon an ass's foal (ch. ix. 9) is quite in harmony with the repeated use in the former part (iii. 8; vi. 12) of the modest term "branch" (= sucker, shoot). And although the later chapters contain a revelation of suffering in the good shepherd, of which there is no hint in the earlier, yet this is just what we should expect from the analogy of Isaiah, where we have the king and the kingdom, the branch and the glory in the earlier prophecies, but no indication of the solitary, patient, wronged, and martyred sufferer till we reach the later portion. It seems to have been the purpose of the Most High to give full force and sweep to the brighter and more glowing anticipations of Messiah's character and course, and after this preparation, to disclose the darker outlines of his extraordinary career. And if, as seems probable, the second part of Zechariah was issued at an advanced period of his life, when the restored exiles had outlived their early trials, and were firmly established on their ancestral soil, their situation would admit of a distinct reference to the suffering Messiah which would have been unsuitable at an earlier period when it was particularly required that they should be consoled and animated.

§ 7. *The alleged Influence of the Persian Theology.*

That Zechariah shows in the style and form of his writings traces of his early Chaldæan education has long been admitted, and the only matter of surprise is that those traces are not more numerous and palpable. But it is often asserted that not only his language but his thought has been affected by contact with Ethnic races and religions, especially by the religious views of the ancient Persians. Thus Mr. Alger says (*Doctrine of a Future Life*, p. 132), "We have unquestionable proofs that during the period from the Babylonish Captivity to the advent of Christ, the Jews borrowed and adapted a great deal from the Persian theology." Again, he quotes (p. 141) the acute and learned scholar, Dr. Martin Haug, as declaring that "Judaism after the exile received an important influence from Zoroastrianism, an influence which in regard to the doctrine of angels, Satan, and the resurrection of the dead, cannot be mistaken." As Zechariah does not refer to the resurrection, it is only the former two of these questions which need to be handled here.

There is no doubt that the two systems, the Hebrew and the Persian, substantially agree on these points. According to the latter, Ormuzd, the Principle of Good, the Fountain of Light, not only created the earth and man, but also a number of spiritual beings, some of whom stood as counsellors around his throne and all of whom were engaged in his service. Over against Ormuzd stood Ahriman, the Principle of Evil, the instigator of all wrong and misery and death, who also was attended by subordinate evil spirits like himself. And these two essential principles stood in eternal conflict with each other. Here then is the doctrine of good and evil angels, as a constituent and very ancient part of the Zoroastrian system, as all expositors of that system agree, however they may differ on other points. Its antiquity was at least six centuries before Christ, and may have been four or five centuries earlier, while Dr. Haug, one of the latest scholars in this field, holds it for certain (*Alger*, p. 141), that Zoroaster lived from fifteen hundred to two thousand years before the Christian era. On the ground mainly of this early date, it is insisted that Zechariah borrowed from the Zend-Avesta. But surely this position is not tenable. What reason is there which compels us to believe that either borrowed from the other? The Hebrew system claims to be a revelation, begun at the fall of man, and gradually enlarging in the scope of its disclosures during a long course of ages, while it narrowed in the numbers of those to whom it was given from the whole race at the first to a particular division in the time of Noah, to a par-

ticular family in the time of Abraham, and lastly to a single individual in the time of Jacob, whose descendants constituted the chosen seed. If this be admitted, what is to hinder the view that some portions of the primeval revelation to Adam, Noah, or Abraham, may have floated down the stream of time outside the channel of the covenant, and, being appropriated by Zoroaster, were wrought by him into the system which bears his name? Beyond all question the tradition of the flood thus descended in almost every direction. It is surely not unreasonable to think that other traditions were transmitted in the same way. But in only one instance were they seized by a man able to retain these fragments of primitive truth and develope them into a complete monotheistic system. In this way the origin of the Zoroastrian doctrine as to angels, good and bad, may be fairly accounted for. But if on the other hand the postulate of an original revelation at the beginning be wholly denied, we are not shut up to the conclusion that Zechariah and his predecessors borrowed from the author of the ancient Persian faith. For if Zoroaster was able by his own faculties to excogitate the system which bears his name, why may not the same power be supposed to have inhered in one or more of the eminent Hebrews? On the plane of mere naturalism, the question resolves itself simply into one of mental grasp and constructive power, and on what possible ground can it be claimed that Moses or Samuel or David were unable to do what the East Bactrian reformer did? Or even if one should allow the preposterous assertion of Mr. Alger (p. 141), that, "The Hebrew theology had no Satan, no demonology until after the residence at Babylon," why could not Zechariah himself have developed this interesting fact of the unseen world without Ethnic aid? He was the heir of a civilization and a literature which had existed for centuries, as well as of by far the purest and most spiritual monotheism which the world has ever seen, and was certainly in a condition to lend truth rather than to borrow it.

Nor does it avail to say, as has been said, "How often the Hebrew people lapsed into idolatry, accepting Pagan gods, doctrines, and ritual, is notorious." For this remark, true as it is, does not meet the case. The people did frequently fall away under the pressure of temptation. The instances are too numerous to be recounted, stretching all the way from the calf worship instituted by Aaron at the foot of Sinai, down to the weeping for Thammuz, and the chambers of imagery which Ezekiel rebuked. But the same faithful narrative which informs us of these apostasies, also informs us that they were never regarded as anything else than departures from the truth. However widely they might prevail, always a few were left who remained faithful to the covenant, and these preserved the hereditary faith intact. Error was transient, truth permanent. A sure evidence of this is found in the Book of Psalms. The human authors of this inspired liturgy were many, and they flourished at widely different periods, yet the theology of the book is the same throughout. The earliest Psalm and the latest agree in every doctrinal sentiment. Even in the northern kingdom where, although Jehovah was still worshipped (except in the times of Ahab and Jezebel), idolatry was formally established, the Prophets who officiated in that kingdom (Hosea, Amos, etc.) never gave place to the prevailing errors, but rebuked them with the utmost vigor and boldness. There is not a single instance in which Hebrew theology was shaped or even colored by these outside influences. Its authorized expounders with one consent rejected every suggestion of the heathen. Why then should Zechariah have proved an exception? Why should he violate the usage of a thousand years and accept new doctrines from a heathen source? The very fact that the nation previously often went astray in whole or in part, and in some instances for a length of time, and yet never succeeded in ingrafting its errors upon its own literature, renders it a most unlikely thing that Zechariah should have turned aside to borrow a heathen superstitution.

Again, if the Prophet borrowed from the Persian system, why did he stop short with its doctrine of angels? How came he to escape its grand peculiarity — the eternal and necessary existence of Ahriman? This is the answer which Zoroaster gave to the vexed question of all theologies and all ages, Whence comes evil? And it is the best or most plausible solution which unassisted reason can render to that perplexing problem. Now if Zechariah obtained from Babylon the idea of Satan, he must have become familiar with the whole doctrine of the Persians upon this subject. How came he to take just so much and no more? Not a trace of dualism appears in any portion of his prophecies. True, he does not, like his illustrious predecessor Isaiah (xlv. 7), put his foot upon the seductive theory with such significant words as these: "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the LORD do all these things." But he ignores it as contemptuously as

if it were unworthy of notice. Yet if he was indebted to this system for the suggestion of an evil spiritual being, the adversary of God and man, it is certainly fair to suppose that in adopting one part of the view, he would at least have hinted at his rejection of the other and more characteristic portion.

Once more. All the circumstances of the case oppose the alleged indebtedness of the Prophet to the Zend-Avesta. The Jews were carried to Babylon against their will, and one of the most painful features of this compulsory exile was its interference with their religious worship and privileges. They had no temple, no altar, no sacrifices, no festivals, no solemn processions, nothing but the law, the Sabbath, and at first the occasional voice of a Prophet. But they appear, with the exception of such as were taken for domestic service, to have been settled together as a sort of colony, so that there was not much difficulty in preserving their ancestral traditions. To these they adhered, seemingly with the more steadfast determination because they were cut off from their regular forms of worship. As Ewald remarks over and over (*Geschichte d. V. I.*, iv. *passim*), they became entirely self-centered, their thoughts reverted incessantly to their past history, to their peculiar position among the nations of the earth, and to the singular hope of a Deliverer to come which lay at the bottom of their political and religious organization. This is shown by the fact of restoration. Instead of being hopelessly dispersed and merged among the nations with whom they were identified for more than two generations, they survived in sufficient numbers and with enough national spirit, to avail themselves of the permission of Cyrus, and return to their desolated ancestral homes and there renew the old commonwealth. The severity of their trials only endeared to them the more their former faith and institutions. A gleam of this feeling shines out in the touching strains of the 137th Psalm, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" One thing is certain. There was a complete and surprising change wrought in the whole body in respect to idol worship. Before the Captivity they were incessantly falling into this snare. There was scarcely one of their heathen neighbors whom they did not at some time imitate in their objects of worship. It made no difference who presented the temptation or what was its particular nature, they were always ready to exchange the glory of the uncorruptible God for a lie, and bow down to the objects their own hands had made. But after the Captivity all this was reversed. Henceforth they became proof against any such allurement. Nay, so far from going of themselves into idolatry, they defied the power of any ruler to force them into it. It was the insane fury of Antiochus Epiphanes for the introduction of the Greek cultus into Judæa which occasioned innumerable martyrdoms, and at last provoked the insurrection of the Maccabees and the series of heroic struggles by which they achieved the independence of their country.

The question then recurs — How is it possible that one of the leaders of the people, an inspired Prophet, who shared in all their intense national convictions and hopes, and who as a Jew regarded Gentiles with far more of scorn and dislike than a Greek of the age of Pericles did those whom he called βάρβαροι, — how could he think of improving or perfecting his theology by adaptations from the views of uncircumcised heathen? Such a thing might have been possible (though not probable) at an earlier day, but that it should have occurred at the era of the restoration, is, I humbly insist, quite inconceivable. Nor is it of any avail to refer to the acknowledged excellences of Zoroastrianism, — its pure theism, its fierce hatred of idolatry, its elevated morality, and its doctrine of a future state, — as if these would conciliate the favor of a devout Hebrew and incline him to adopt new views from such a source. The immemorial faith of the nation was that it had been chosen by Jehovah as the depository of his truth, and therefore had express and immediate revelations from him on all points of religious faith. As long as they held this conviction, it would seem nothing less than treason and sacrilege to borrow doctrinal opinions from any ethnic system, however pure and spiritual it might seem. A pious Jew could not admit that he had anything to learn about religion from an uncircumcised stranger.

§ 8. *Literature.*

I. Patristic. Jerome († 420), Theodore of Mopsuestia († 429), Cyril of Alexandria († 444), Theodoret († 457), all treat of Zechariah in Commentaries upon *The Twelve Minor Prophets*.

II. Jewish. R. Salomon ben Isaak, called Jarchi or Raschi († 1105). R. Abraham ben Meir ibn Esra, called Aben Esra († 1167), David Kimchi († 1230). All these with the Tar-

gum are contained in Buxtorf's *Rabbinical Bible*, Basle, 1618. Kimchi, translated by Dr. M'Caul, London, 1837.

III. Reformers. M. Luther *Ausleg. des Proph. Zecharias*, Wittenberg, 1528; Melancthon, *Comm. in Zechariam*, Witt., 1553; Calvin, *Prælec. in Proph. Min.;* Tremellius and Junius, *Bib. Sac.*, 1579; J. J. Grynæus, *Comm. in Zech.*, Geneva, 1581.

IV. Later Writers. C. Vitringa, *Comm. ad Zach. quæ Supersunt*, 1734; B. G. Flügge, *Weissag. des Proph. Zach.*, 1784; Venema, *Sermon. in Zech.*, 1787; Blayney, *New Translation of Zech.*, 1787. Besides, in works on the *Minor Prophets:* Cocceius, 1652; Markius, 1698–1700; Archbishop Newcome, 1785.

V. Of the Present Century. F. B. Köster, *Meletem. in Zach. partem poster.*, 1818; E. Forberg, *Comm. Crit. and Exeg. in Zach. part. post.*, 1824; J. Stonard, *Comm. on Zechariah*, London, 1824; Hengstenberg, *Integrità des Sach.*, Berlin, 1831; *Christology* (second edition), 1856; J. D. F. Burger, *Etudes sur Zech.*, Strasburg, 1841; M. Baumgarten, *Nachtgesichte Sach.*, 1854; E. F. J. v. Ortenberg, *Die Bestandtheile des buch. Sach.*, 1859; W. Neuman, *Weissag. des Sachar.*, 1859; Th. Kliefoth, *Der Proph. Sachar.*, 1862.

In works on the *Minor Prophets:* Rosenmüller, 1826; Henderson, 1830; F. W. C. Umbreit, 1845; J. Schlier, 1861; Hitzig, 1863; C. F. Keil, 1866; Prof. Cowles, N. Y., 1866; C. Wordsworth, 1870.

In works on the *Post-exile Prophets:* T. V. Moore, N. Y., 1856; A. Köhler, 1860–65; W. Pressel, 1870.

In Introductions: De Wette, Hävernick, Bleek, Stähelin, Donaldson.

In other writings: J. C. K. Hoffman, *Weissagung und Erfüll.*, 1841; *Schriftbeweis*, 1857 Reinke, *Die Mess. Weissagungen*, Giessen, 1859–1862.

THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH.

PART FIRST.

UTTERANCES FOR THE PRESENT TIME.

Chapters I.–VIII.

I. THE INTRODUCTION.

Chapter I. 1–6.

A. *A Call to Repentance* (vers. 1–3). B. *Enforced by an Appeal to the Experience of their Fathers* (vers. 4–6).

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of Jehovah
unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,
2 Jehovah hath been sore displeased with your fathers.[1]
3 Therefore say thou[2] unto them, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Return ye unto me, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
And I will return unto you, saith Jehovah of Hosts.
4 Be not as your fathers, to whom the former prophets cried, saying,
Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Turn, I beseech you, from your evil ways and from your evil doings;[3]
But they hearkened not, and paid no attention to me,
Saith Jehovah.
5 Your fathers, where are they?
And the prophets, can they live forever?
6 Nevertheless,[4] my words and my statutes,[5]
Which I commanded my servants the prophets,—
Did they not overtake[6] your fathers, so that they turned and said,
Like as Jehovah of Hosts purposed to do unto us,
According to our ways and according to our doings,
So hath He dealt with us.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 2.—The collocation of the verb and its cognate noun renders this verse very emphatic. Literally, Angry was Jehovah at your fathers with anger.

2 Ver. 3.—The vav conv. with the Perfect, indicating a necessary consequence from what precedes, is rendered in the imperative.—אֲלֵהֶם does not refer to the nearest antecedent "fathers," but to the prophet's contemporaries, implied in the pronoun "your."

3 Ver. 4.—The Kethib מַעַלְילֵיכֶם is to be retained, both because the preposition is wanting in the Keri, and also because the latter seems to have originated in the offense taken at the masculine ending in the plural of a noun feminine in the singular, although similar cases are not rare (Green, *Heb. Gram.*, § 200 *b*).

4 Ver. 6.—אַךְ. This word is very inadequately rendered in the E. V., by the simple adversative *but*

5 Ver. 6.—חֻקַּי. For a precisely similar use of this word, see Zeph. ii. and Job xxiii. 14.

6 Ver. 6.—הִשִּׂיגוּ. The marginal rendering of E. V., *overtake*, is to be preferred to the text, *take hold*.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The main design of Zechariah's prophetic activity was to administer consolation and encouragement to the people of God still in a condition of weakness and suffering. This plainly appears from the general tenor of the night-visions, from the promised change of fasts into festivals, and from the glowing pictures of future blessedness and honor which occur in the latter portion of his book. Yet it was necessary to prevent these consolations from being usurped by any to whom they

did not belong, and to show that repentance and holy living were indispensable conditions of the attainment of any of these blessings. This thought is again and again expressed in the course of the prophetic revelations (iii. 7, vi. 15, vii. 7–10, viii. 16, 17, x. 1, 2, xi. 10, xiv. 20), but it is made especially prominent in these opening verses, which seem to be a kind of introduction both to the prophet's labors in general, and also to the present collection of his utterances. In them Zechariah sounds the key-note of all spiritual religion, a return to God, and urges its importance by the mention of their fathers' sins and their fathers' punishments.

Ver. 1. **In the eighth month**, etc. The first note of time does not mean, "In the eighth new moon" (C. B. Michaelis, Köhler), because *chŏdesh* is never used in this sense in chronological notices. The general, introductory nature of this particular address did not require that the precise day of the month should be indicated. On other points in this verse, see the Introduction.

Ver. 2. **Jehovah hath been sore displeased**, etc. The mention of God's wrath is the ground of the summons in the following verse. Because God had been so angry with the **fathers**, the children should now repent in all sincerity. The severity of this wrath had been painfully shown in the overthrow of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, and the bitter exile in Babylon (Ps. cxxxvii.). The contradiction between this verse and the statement in ver. 17, that Jehovah was "but a little displeased," is only apparent, for the latter refers to the duration of the wrath, while the former expresses its intensity.

Ver. 3. **Return ye . . . I will return.** The exhortation and promise contained in this verse, often repeated elsewhere (Mal. iii. 7, Jas. iv. 8), are remarkably strengthened by the trine repetition of "**Saith Jehovah of Hosts.**" The occasion of the summons is not to be sought in a temporary abandonment of the work of rebuilding the Temple, for which there is no historical ground, but in the spiritual condition of the people. It reminded them that the mere outward work was not enough, but there was need of a thorough conversion, a genuine heartfelt return from their former works and ways to the service and enjoyment of God.

Ver. 4. **Be not as your fathers.** Since naturally parents are apt to transmit their own character and course to their children, the prophet here repeats his injunction in a negative form, bidding his countrymen carefully to shun the example of their predecessors, who had utterly scorned the Lord's remonstrances. The **former prophets** are those before the exile, and Zechariah intentionally overlooks Daniel, because he officiated at a heathen court and not in the midst of his people, and his prophecies treated not so much of the inward duties of Israel as of its outward fortunes amid the mighty revolutions of the heathen world. For a full summation of the course of the former prophets as here set forth, see 2 Kings xvii. 13–23. The ways and works of the earlier generation are called **evil**, in the first instance, because they were morally corrupt, but also because they were followed by sore consequences (Köhler).

Ver. 5. **Your fathers, where are they?** The concluding verses of the section sustain the warning not to imitate the fathers, by pointing out the fate which overtook them in consequence of their disobedience. The general sense is plain, and acknowledged by all interpreters, but the precise force of the questions in ver. 5 is variously stated. Both, of course, imply a negative answer, but in what sense is the decease of **the prophets** mentioned? Some (Jerome, Cyril), referring to Jeremiah xxxvii. 10, suppose that false prophets are intended; but the persons spoken of here must be the same as those mentioned in the preceding verse, who are manifestly true servants of God. Others make the second question a rejoinder of the people to the first (Raschi, Burger, etc.), which seems forced. Others say that a contrast is presented between the fleeting, dying prophets, and the ever-living word of Jehovah (Calvin, Grotius, Hitzig, etc.), as if the meaning were, I allow that both your fathers and my prophets are dead; but my words, are they dead? but the latter part of this contrast is not found in the text, but supplied by the interpreters. Another class conceive that the point of the second question is to remind Zechariah's contemporaries that the voice of prophecy would soon cease, and therefore they should heed it while they had the opportunity (Abarb., Ewald), which is a very natural sense of the words if they stood alone; but it is contradicted by verse 6, which shows that the reference is not to the existing, but to the former prophets. The true view is the one given by Köhler and others, that the former of the two verses contains a concession which is limited and corrected by the latter. Thus: Your fathers are long since dead, and it may seem as though they had thus escaped the threatenings pronounced against them; the prophets, too, have gone the way of all flesh, and apparently their words died with them; nevertheless your fathers did not die until the threatenings of the short-lived prophets had overtaken them, nor until they themselves had acknowledged that fact. This view is sustained by the strong disjunctive conjunction at the commencement of verse 6. The phrase, "take hold," in E. V., fails to give the force of the Hebrew verb. The prophet conceives of God's purposes of wrath as commissioned messengers which followed the Israelites and *overtook* them (cf. Deut. xxviii. 15, 45). Mournful acknowledgments of this fact are to be found in Lamentations ii. 17, in Daniel's penitential prayer (ix. 4 ff.), and in Ezra's humbling confession (ix. 6, 7). There may be long delay, and consequently a growing hope of escape, but sooner or later every transgressor makes the affecting acknowledgment of the Psalmist (xl. 13), "mine iniquities have overtaken me."

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The opening words of Zechariah state a truth of great importance, — and none the less so because in every age a persistent attempt has been made to deny or to evade it — that *God has wrath.* The blinding influence of their own depravity renders men insensible to the evil of sin, and they easily come to transfer their own views to their Maker — "thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself" (Ps. l. 21). Hence they attribute to Him an easy good nature which readily condones moral offenses and is quite too gentle to give effect to the forebodings of a guilty conscience. To set forth his justice, and assert his prerogative as governor of the world, is regarded as an unwarrantable disturbance of men's peace and an impeachment of the amiableness of the divine character. This device is as old as the Apostles, and Paul exposes it with his usual vehemence, "Let no man deceive you with vain words, for be-

cause of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph. v. 6). God has wrath. Nature bears witness to the fact. The earth does not everywhere smile with verdure and beauty, but all over its surface shows blots and scars which suggest the moral disorder of the race. This fact has been set forth with equal eloquence and truth by Mr. Ruskin. Speaking of the revelations of God made on the face of creation, he says, "Wrath and threatening are invariably mingled with love; and in the utmost solitudes of nature, the existence of hell seems to me as legibly declared by a thousand spiritual utterances as of heaven. It is well for us to dwell with thankfulness on the unfolding of the flower and the falling of the dew, and the sleep of the green fields in the sunshine; but the blasted trunk, the barren rock, the moaning of the bleak winds, the roar of the black, perilous whirlpools of the mountain streams, the solemn solitudes of moors and seas, the continual fading of all beauty into darkness and of all strength into dust, have these no language for us? We may seek to escape their teachings by reasonings touching the good which is wrought out of all evil; but it is vain sophistry. The good succeeds to the evil as day succeeds the night, but so also the evil to the good. Gerizim and Ebal, birth and death, light and darkness, heaven and hell, divide the existence of man and his futurity."

2. The words in ver. 2 do not belong to the message to the people, but were delivered only to the Prophet; and they disclose to us the internal pressure under which he entered upon his office (Pressel). A due sense of the power of God's wrath lies at the basis of all true earnestness on the part of his Prophets. It is the "burning fire shut up in the bones" (Jer. xx. 9) which imparts its own vehemence to the message, and produces corresponding conviction in them that hear. We observe it in the Prophet of all Prophets, the Saviour Himself. His groaning in spirit at the grave of Lazarus, his tears at the sight of Jerusalem, show how deeply he felt the terribleness of God's anger. Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* affords a remarkable testimony from his own experience. "Now this part of my work I fulfilled with great earnestness, for the terrors of the law and guilt for my transgressions lay heavy on my conscience; I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel, even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment. Indeed, I have been as one sent to them from the dead; I went myself in chains, to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in my own conscience that I persuaded them to be aware of."

3. The Lord's first message to the people by the mouth of Zechariah contains the fundamental principle of all his communications to fallen men, alike in the Old Testament and in the New. There is a command and a promise, each comprehending in itself all others of the same class. Men are summoned to turn back to God, and then He engages to return to them. Alienation from God is the primary sin. Men turn away from their Maker, hide from Him like Adam, or wander off like the prodigal, and of course are dissatisfied and wretched. Having left the fountain of living waters, they find the cisterns they hew out for themselves to be broken cisterns which can hold no water. No matter how often the experiment is repeated, it always fails. The only escape, the first duty, is to turn to the Lord. This duty would be difficult, nay, it would be impossible, but for the gracious promise which accompanies it. God is found of those who seek Him. This is a truth of the older dispensation as well as of the later. The father in our Saviour's parable who, while yet the wayward son was a great way off, discerned, and welcomed, and ran to meet his returning steps, is only a vivid picture of him who waited to be gracious all through the history of his ancient people. Even in the early days of Job, Eliphaz announced (xxii. 21) the cheering assurance, "Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee."

4. God's providence not only insures the fulfillment of his threatenings, but compels the acknowledgment of that fulfillment from those who suffer it. In the case of the Jews this recognition was frequently uttered, as mentioned before. (See Exeget. and Crit., *ad finem.*)

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

T. V. Moore: It is a sign of a sickly piety when men are willing to hear nothing of the wrath of God against sin. If men expect God to return to them in prosperity, they must return to Him in penitence. The flower averted from the sun must turn toward it, to catch its genial smile.

Pressel: No mercy without return, and no return without mercy. He who will not hear, shall feel. Haste (*eile*) that you may not be overtaken (*ereilt*). 1. Haste, for your day of grace is short, and even the messengers of grace are passing away. 2. If once you are overtaken, your eyes will open too late, and only with trembling lips can you give honor to the Lord.

Wordsworth: Zechariah comes forth like John the Baptist, and begins his preaching with a call to repentance, and warns the people by the history of their fathers, that no spiritual privileges will profit them without holiness, but rather will aggravate their guilt and increase their condemnation if they disobey God.

Calvin: We learn here that the examples set up as a shield for wrong-doing are so far from being of any weight before God that they enhance our guilt. Yet this folly infatuates many, for the Papists claim their religion to be holy and irreprehensible, because it has been handed down by their fathers.

II. THE NIGHT VISIONS.

Chapter I. 7–VI. 15.

This division contains a series of visions all given at one time and therefore naturally supposed to be closely connected with each other and to exhibit an orderly progress of thought. The first vision sets forth the evident need of a divine interference in behalf of the people, with a strong assurance that it shall be vouchsafed. The second indicates one form of this interference in the fact that the foes are driven away. The third promises great enlargement and absolute security. The fourth exhibits the forgiveness of sin which had been the cause of all the previous troubles and endangered the recurrence of them. The fifth is a counterpart to the fourth by promising the positive communication of God's Spirit and grace which secure sanctification as well as justification. The sixth guards against a perversion of the two preceding visions as if they warranted security on the part of the impenitent, by exhibiting the fearful curse of God upon all sinners of whatever class. The seventh enforces the same point still further by representing that a longer and yet more dreadful deportation than that to Babylon awaited the unfaithful members of the theocracy. Finally, the eighth completes the entire series of visions in an artistic manner by returning to the point whence they set out, and repeating much the same imagery. It shows the accomplishment of all which the first image promised. From the purified and divinely protected theocracy, symbolized by mountains of brass, there go forth executioners of judgment who do not stay their hands until God's Spirit is completely satisfied. But there is another future in reserve for the distant heathen, besides that of judgment. They are to be converted from enemies into friends, and in the days of the Branch shall come from far, and freely contribute to build up and glorify the Lord's holy kingdom. This cheering thought is exhibited in the shape of a symbolical action, appended to the visions and appropriately closing and crowning their hallowed disclosures.

VISION I. THE MAN AMONG THE MYRTLES.

Chapter I. 7–17.

A. *A symbolical Representation of the tranquil Condition of the Heathen World and consequent Need of Divine Interference* (vers. 7–11). B. *Intercession for Suffering and Desolate Judæa* (vers. 12, 13). C. *Assurances of Relief and Restoration* (vers. 14–17).

7 On the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month which is the month Sebat,[1]
in the second year of Darius, came the word of Jehovah to Zechariah, the son of
8 Iddo the prophet, saying: I saw that[2] night, and behold a man riding upon a
red horse, and he stood among the myrtles[3] that were in the valley, and behind
9 him were red, bay and white horses. And I said, what are these, my lord? And
10 the angel that talked with[4] me said to me, I will show thee what they are. And
the man who stood among the myrtles answered,[5] and said, These are they whom
11 Jehovah has sent to walk through the earth. And they answered the angel of
Jehovah who stood among the myrtles, and said, We have gone through the earth,
12 and behold, all the earth sits still[6] and is at rest. Then the angel of the Lord
answered and said, Jehovah of Hosts! how long wilt thou not pity Jerusalem and
the cities of Judah, against which thou hast been angry these[7] seventy years?
13 And Jehovah answered the angel that talked with me, good words, comforting[8]
14 words. And the angel that talked[9] with me, said to me, Cry, saying:

Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
I am jealous[10] for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy,
15 And I burn with great anger against the nations at ease.
For I was angry for a little, but they helped forward the affliction.
16 Therefore thus saith Jehovah,
I have returned to Jerusalem in mercy,[12]
My house shall be built in her, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
And a measuring line[13] shall be stretched over Jerusalem.
17 Cry also,[14] saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,

My cities shall yet overflow[15] with prosperity,
And Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion,
And shall yet choose Jerusalem.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 7. — שְׁבָט, the month which extended from the new moon of February to the next new moon. The name is Chaldee, but of uncertain etymology.

2 Ver. 8. — הַלַּיְלָה is not accusative of duration = by night, for which there is no other example, but *the* or *that* night, namely, that of the day mentioned in the preceding verse.

3 Ver. 8. — *The myrtles.* Ewald, following the LXX., supposes the true reading of הַהֲדַסִּים to be הֶהָרִים, as in vi. 1, and renders *mountains;* but there is no reason for departing from the Masoretic text, and the relation of the last vision to the first is one not of resemblance but contrast.

4 Ver. 9. — בִּי has been translated *in* me, *to* me, *through* me, and *with* me. The last is more accordant with usage (Num. xii. 8) and the connection.

5 Ver. 10. — Henderson says that עָנָה signifies to *commence* or *proceed* to speak, as well as to answer, and cites ἀποκρίνομαι in the New Testament as used in the same way. But his remark is true neither of the one nor the other. The reference always is to a question preceding, either expressed or implied, or to the resumption of discourse by the same speaker after an interval, as Is. xxi. 9. Cf. Vitringa's remark quoted under iii. 4, *infra.*

6 Ver 11. — *Sits still* is a far better rendering of יֹשֶׁבֶת than the bald and prosaic derived sense adopted by the LXX. and the Vulgate, κατοικεῖται, *habitatur.*

7 Ver. 12. — זֶה שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה might be rendered *now seventy years* (cf. vii. 3). A similar combination of noun and pronoun in the singular with numeral adjective in the plural, is not rare. See Deut. viii. 2-4; Josh. xiv. 10; Esther iv. 11. Nordheimer (§ 890) explains it as referring to the abstract idea of time; but it seems to me to be due rather to the conception of the various years as a single period or cycle, which like a collective noun would of course admit of a singular pronoun.

8 Ver. 13. — נִחֻמִים. The Keri omits the dagesh in ם, but some codd. in Kennicott have the form נִחוּמִים, which grammatically is the more correct. It is not an adjective, but a noun in apposition.

9 Ver. 14. — This verse and the one before it exemplify one of the infelicities of the E. V., which renders the same original word, in ver. 13 *talked*, and in ver. 14 *communed.*

10 Ver. 14. — קִנֵּאתִי. The *pret.* means not merely, "I have become jealous," but "I have been and am." God's jealousy had already begun to manifest itself.

11 Ver. 15. — Fürst, *sub voce*, with great plausibility, renders עָזְרוּ intransitively, "they exerted their power" with a view to destruction.

12 Ver. 16. — רַחֲמִים occurs only in the plural. To translate it so, therefore, as in A. V., while apparently more literal, is in reality less so.

13 Ver. 16. — The Kethib קוה, to be read קָוֶה, is an old form, found elsewhere only in 1 King vii. 23 and Jer. xxxi. 39, for which was substituted the contracted form קַו.

14 Ver. 17. — עוֹד, *also* here seems to express the sense better than the customary *yet.* The Prophet was to cry something more besides what he was told in ver. 14.

15 Ver. 17. — תְּפוּצֶנָה is simply a variant orthography of תְּפוּצֶינָה (Green *H. G.*, § 158, 3).

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 7. The date of this revelation is from three to four months after Zechariah's first prophecy and exactly two months after Haggai's last, namely, on the **twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, Shebat**, our February, of the year 519. The precise day of the month, here and in Haggai ii. 10-20, seems to have been suggested by the fact that on just this day of the sixth month the building of the Temple had been resumed (Hag. i. 14, 15). The Lord thus indicated his pleasure in the resumption of the work. The visions are called **the word of Jehovah**, because they had the significance and answered the purpose of oral revelations.

Ver. 8. **I saw that night.** The disclosure was made to the Prophet, not in a dream (Ewald, Hitzig), but in a vision. His senses were not locked in sleep, but like Peter at Joppa (Acts x. 10, xi. 4) he was ἐν ἐκστάσει. This trance-like condition, according to iv. 1, bears the same relation to ordinary human consciousness which that does to the condition of sleep. A man's usual state when under the control of the senses and able to see only what his own faculties discover, is one of spiritual sleep; but an ecstatic condition, in which the senses and the entire lower life are quiescent, and only pictures of divine objects are reflected in the soul as in a pure and bright mirror, is one of spiritual waking. The Prophet received his visions at *night*, because then his susceptibility for divine communications was most lively, in consequence of the stillness, the suspension of worldly cares and the freedom from outward impressions. In the space of *one* night the whole series of stately symbolic scenes passed before his spiritual eye, for the title in ver. 7 extends to the end of chap. vi. after which a new title first occurs, and besides, the narrative itself shows (ii. 1; iv. 1, etc.) that as soon as one vision ended another began. **Behold, a man riding upon a red horse, etc.** *A man*, i. e., one in the shape or appearance of a man, for manifestly an angel and not a human being is intended. He is seated upon a *red* horse, the meaning of

which is seen in the fact that red is the color of blood. In Rev. vi. 4, it is a rider on a red horse who receives a great sword and has power to take peace from the earth and cause men to kill one another. The color of the horse then is a symbol of the purpose of its rider, namely, wrath and bloodshed. He stood among the myrtles that were in מְצֻלָה. The meaning of this word is much contested. The Vulgate gives it *in profundo*, which supposes that the text is only another form of מְצוּלָה, which ordinarily means the depths of the sea. Hengstenberg and Baumgarten adopt this, and explain it as a symbolical designation of the abyss-like power of the world, in which the Church stands like a feeble, lowly shrub. Others (Gesenius, Henderson), following the LXX., derive the word from צָלַל, in the sense of *shade* (so Dr. Van Dyck in the *New Arabic Version*), but in this case we should expect a different middle vowel, and besides, as Pressel says, it would be a pleonasm to speak of trees in a shady place. Others (Hitzig, Fürst, Bunsen), following an Arabic analogy, render it *tent*, by which they suppose heaven is intended, but this is extremely artificial. There seems no reason to depart from the Vulgate and Targum, or to make it other than = *deep place*, *i. e.*, a low valley or bottom. It will then stand in vivid contrast with the corresponding point in the eighth vision, which is the complement of the first. There, the chariots start from between two mountains of brass = the theocracy under the mighty protection of Jehovah; here, the horsemen issue from amid myrtles in an open bottom = the Church in a condition of feebleness and exposure. Behind the first rider are other **horses** of different colors. They have riders (see ver. 11), but this fact is allowed to be understood, because the emphasis is laid upon the color of the horses. They are like their leader **red** (explained above), or **bay, or white.** The last like the first is easily understood from Scripture usage — white being the reflection of heavenly glory (Matt. xvii. 2), and therefore the symbol of victory (Rev. vi. 2). But the second epithet is difficult. שְׂרֻקִּים is rendered by the LXX.: ψαροὶ καὶ ποικίλοι, Vulg., *varii*, Peshito *versicolores*, after whom Maurer, Umbreit, Keil, etc., render it as in text of A. V., *speckled*. But Gesenius and Fürst derive it from an Arabic root, signifying *dark red*, and Hengstenberg renders this *brown*, but Köhler *bay* or *flame-colored*. The latter gives the better sense. The colors do not signify the three kingdoms against whom the riders were sent (Cyril, Jerome, *et al.*), for all appear to go in company, nor the quarters of the heavens (Maurer, Hitzig, *et al.*), for the fourth quarter is wanting; but the nature of the mission which they had to perform, namely, to take an active part in the agitation of the nations, those upon red horses by war and bloodshed, those upon bay horses by burning and destroying, and those upon white horses by victory over the world.

Ver. 9. The Prophet asks, **What are these,** *i. e.*, what do they signify? The question is addressed to one whom he calls **my lord,** but who is this? Manifestly, the one who gives the answer, the *angelus interpres*. It is no objection to this that he has not been mentioned before, for in prophecies, and especially in visions, from their dramatic character, persons are frequently introduced in such a way that only from what they say or do, can we learn who they are. This *angelus interpres*, or *collocutor*, had for his sole function to open the spiritual eyes and ears of the Prophet and cause him to understand the meaning of the visions. The preposition in the phrase הַדֹּבֵר בִּי is not to be understood, with Ewald, Keil, etc., as denoting the *internal* character of the communications made, for this would not distinguish him from the other angels of the vision, but the phrase is simply an official designation of the angel's character.

Ver. 10. **And the man who stood among, etc.** The rider on the red horse states the object of the horsemen's mission. He is said to have *answered*, because, although not referring to any definite question, his words were a reply to the Prophet's desire for an explanation.

Ver. 11. The riders themselves state the result of their mission. This is called an *answer* to the Angel of the Lord, because it replies to a question implied in the circumstances. It is given to the **Angel of the Lord.** But is this a created or an uncreated angel? The latter view is maintained by McCaul, Lange, Hengstenberg, Philippi, and Kahnis, the former by Hoffman, Delitzsch, Kurtz, Köhler, Pressel. That the angel of Jehovah is distinguished from the other angels, and in many places identified with Jehovah, is undeniable (Gen. xvi. 7–10, xxxi. 11–13, xxxii. 25–31 comp. with Hos. xii. 4; Ex. iii. 2–4; Judg. vi. 11–22; Zech. iii. 1, 2). On the other hand, there are passages where he seems to be discriminated from Jehovah (Ex. xxiii. 20–22, xxxii. 34). The simplest way of reconciling these two classes is to adopt the old view that this angel is the Second person of the Godhead, even at that early period appearing as the revealer of the Father. The mingled clearness and obscurity of the representation is quite analogous to the same features in the delineation of the Messiah in Pss. ii., xlv., lxxii., cx., and in various prophecies before and after David's time. In this vision he appears first as a man upon a red horse, then as the leader of the troop standing behind him, and when these have made their report, as the angel of Jehovah who presents the prayer of the pious before God. The answer which he receives from the troop is that **all the earth sits still and is at rest,** — a phrase upon which Wordsworth comments as denoting proud and licentious ease, because, as he says, the word for "at rest" is *shaanân*. This is a strange mistake, for it is another word, שֹׁקֶטֶת, which rarely, if ever, has any moral significance, and means merely quiet, peaceful security, without reference to the way in which that state has been attained or is employed. Here the sense is that the nations at large were dwelling in a calm, serene repose, undisturbed by any foe. The reference seems to be to Haggai ii., where the Lord promised that in a little while He would shake the heavens and the earth and all nations, and in consequence his house would be filled with glory. The riders now report that having gone through the earth they find it not at all shaken but quiet and serene. This statement, furnishing such a vivid contrast to the prostrate and suffering condition of the people of God, gave occasion to the intercession recounted in the next verse.

Ver. 12. **How long wilt thou not pity Jerusalem, etc.?** The language is that of intercessory expostulation. The reference to **these seventy years** does not imply that that period predicted by Jeremiah (xxv. 12) was just drawing to

a close, for it had already expired in the first year of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1). But although the people had been restored, they were still in a sad state, — the capital for the most part in ruins, its walls broken down, its gates burnt (Neh. i. 3), the population small, the greater part of the land still a waste, and the rebuilding of the Temple embarrassed with difficulties. It might well seem as if the troubles of the exile would never end, and the more so, since there was no sign of that violent agitation of the heathen world which was to be the precursor of Israel's exaltation. The intercession was effectual.

Ver. 13. **And Jehovah answered,** etc. Here the answer is given to another person than the questioner. The best explanation is that of Hengstenberg, that "the angel of the Lord had asked the question not for his own sake, but simply in order that consolation and hope might be communicated through the *angelus interpres* to the Prophet, and through him to the nation at large." **Good words** are words that promise good. Cf Josh. xxiii. 14 (Heb.); Jer. xxix. 10. The contents of these good and comforting words follow in vers. 14–17, the first two of which assert Jehovah's active affection for his people, and the latter two, his purpose to manifest that love in the restoration and enlargement of Jerusalem.

Ver. 14. **I am jealous,** etc. קִנֵּא, lit., to burn, to glow, indicates a vehement emotion which may have its motive in jealousy (Num. v. 14), or in envy (Gen. xxvi. 14), or in hatred (Gen. xxxvii. 11), or in love (Num. xxv. 11). The last expresses its force here, which is greatly strengthened by the addition of the cognate noun. Jehovah is inspired with a burning zeal **for Jerusalem and for Zion,** the holy hill which He has chosen for his habitation. He had already displayed this in part, and would soon develop it to the full.

Ver. 15. Toward the heathen, on the contrary, Jehovah **burned with great anger.** This was partly because they were "**at ease,**" *i. e.*, not merely tranquil, but in a state of carnal security, proudly confident in their power and prosperity, but mainly because, while He had been **angry for a little,** *i. e.*, time (cf. Job x. 20), they, on the contrary, had **helped forward the affliction,** lit., had helped for evil, *i. e.*, so that evil was the result. The Lord contemplated a moderate, limited chastisement in love, with a view to the purification and restoration of his people. The heathen, on the contrary, rioted in the sufferings of helpless Israel, and would willingly prolong them.

Ver. 16. **I have returned . . . . Jerusalem.** The emphatic **therefore** indicates the consequence of God's love for Jerusalem. He has actually returned with purposes of mercy, and these shall be fully executed. All hindrances shall be removed, the Temple completed, and instead of scattered houses here and there, the whole city shall pass under the surveyor's **measuring line.** But the blessing is not to be confined to the capital, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 17. **Cry also,** *i. e.*, in addition to the foregoing. The other cities of Judah shall **overflow with prosperity,** lit., *be scattered*, yet not by an invading foe, but by the inward pressure of abundant growth requiring them to diffuse themselves over a larger surface (cf. ii. 4, viii. 4, ix. 17, x. 7). This overflow of blessing will assure the covenant people that Jehovah is still comforting Zion, and has by no means renounced the purpose in pursuance of which he had originally chosen Jerusalem. The same cheering reference to God's electing love is found in ch. ii. 12 and iii. 2.

The object of this first vision was to satisfy the dispirited colony that although there was no present appearance of an approaching fulfillment of promised blessings, yet these blessings were sure. Jehovah had appointed the instruments of his righteous judgments, and by these would accomplish his purposes upon the ungodly nations, and thus secure the salvation of Zion. The fulfillment then is easily pointed out. The completion of the Temple, the restoration of the city under Ezra and Nehemiah, the increase of the population, all declared Jehovah's fidelity to his engagements. But this was only the beginning. Zechariah, like his predecessors in office, looks down the whole vista of the future, and utters germinant predictions, as Bacon calls them, which do not exhaust themselves in any one period, but wrap up in pregnant sentences long cycles of historical development. The first vision presents the general theme of the whole series, each of which stands closely related to the others, so that there is an evident advance from the beginning to the end, as will appear in the course of the exposition.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. **How near are the seen and unseen worlds!** Nor are they without sympathy with each other. We have a craving for the knowledge of creatures higher than ourselves, and yet fellow servants with us of the same Creator. All the various forms of Polytheism show this natural longing of the race, but the Scripture satisfies it by revealing to us the existence, character, and function of the holy angels. This revelation is not made merely to gratify a curiosity, however intelligent and reasonable, but to furnish important aid in the conduct of life. It pleases God to employ the agency of these supernatural beings in establishing his kingdom in the world. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. i. 14.) In the book of Genesis, after the call of Abraham, we observe frequent instances of this blessed ministry, guiding, protecting, and upholding the patriarchs (xviii., xix., xxiv., xxvii., xxxii.). Again, in the time of the Judges similar manifestations were made to Gideon and to Manoah. But at and after the Captivity, their interposition not only resumes its former frequency, but is manifested on a wider scale. To Daniel and Zechariah the angels are revealed, not only as watching over the covenant people, but as executing the counsels of Jehovah toward the heathen world. There does not seem to be the least necessity for attributing this circumstance to the influence of Chaldæan or Persian modes of thought upon the minds of these prophets. They follow in the line of the earlier traditions of the chosen people, with only that degree of variation and expansion which is natural under the altered circumstances of the case. It was a comforting thought to a feeble colony overshadowed by a colossal empire to be reminded of superhuman helpers whose mighty interposition was ever at hand. Of course even these celestial beings could prove efficient only by the power of God, but their intermediate agency rendered that power more directly conceivable. In the New Testament there is not the same prominence given to these "sons of God" (Job xxxviii. 7), but enough is stated of their ministrations at the Incarnation, in the wilderness, the

garden, and the sepulchre, and of their sympathy with the joys and sorrows of God's people, to make us feel that the shining stairway which rose over Jacob's head to the clouds (Gen. xxviii. 12) still exists, and is traversed by the same holy beings. It is still true, as Spenser said, —

"They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant,
And all for love and nothing for reward;
Oh! why should heavenly God to man have such regard?"

2. The extraordinary position assigned to the angel of Jehovah in this vision and also in the one recorded in the third chapter, continues and completes the long chain of ancient testimonies beginning in Genesis, to the existence of self-distinctions in the Godhead. (See the summary of the argument in Lange's *Genesis*, p. 386, or Keil *On Pent.*, i. 184, and Hengstenberg's *Christology*, i. 107 ff., iv. 285.) The view that this exalted personage was only a created angel through whom God issues and executes his commands, and who speaks and acts in God's name, was favored by Origen, defended by Augustine, adopted by Jerome and Gregory the Great, and has been maintained in our own day by some eminent critics; but it cannot displace what has been the almost universal doctrine of the early Church and of the great body of believers in all ages, namely, that this angel was the Old Testament form of the Logos of John, a being connected with the supreme God by unity of nature, but personally distinct from Him. The most frequent and plausible objection to the old view affirms that it unreasonably transfers the revelations of the later dispensation to the older, and introduces notions entirely foreign to Hebrew habits of thought. But the contrary is the case. The Old Testament records one stage in the progressive development of religious truth, and the New Testament another, and both correspond in the most striking manner to each other. Indeed, they present what is not found, is not claimed in any other book in the world, — a complete system of typical and antitypical institutions, events, and persons. This feature has been sometimes pressed to an extravagant extent, and applied where it has no real bearing. But its general correctness is admitted by all sober interpreters. This being so, if the triunity of the divine nature is plainly set forth in the New Testament, especially if the great revealer of the Father (John i. 18) is emphasized by evangelists and apostles, is it not to be expected that a foreshadowing of so important a truth will be found in the elder Scriptures? Guided by such an analogy, it was neither uncritical nor rash for the Church to conclude that the being called the Angel of Jehovah, the Angel of his Presence, the Angel of the Covenant, in whom Jehovah puts his name, who is identified with Jehovah, who performs the peculiar works of Jehovah, and yet is in some sense distinct from Him, is the same divine person who is represented in the New Testament as the brightness of the Father's glory and the express type of his essence, the image of the invisible God; in whose face the glory of God shines, and in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

3. The intercession ascribed to our Lord in the Christian Scriptures was not only typified by a remarkable function of the high-priest on the great day of atonement, but was actually performed by the second person of the Godhead long before his incarnation. He was "the lamb slain before the foundation of the world," and the merits of his priceless expiation could as well be availed of antecedently as subsequently, and they were. In all the affliction of his people, he was afflicted, and his potential voice was habitually uttered for their relief. The returned exiles, who were laying again the groundwork of Judah's prosperity, were discouraged, not only by their scanty numbers and impoverished resources, but by the consciousness of their own and their fathers' sins. What claim had such as they upon the Holy One of Israel? The prophet draws aside the veil and discloses an Intercessor who had nothing to hinder Him from immediate access to the Most High, and the surest prospect of success. *How long, O Lord*, was the anxious refrain of many a distressed believer in former years; and ages afterward John heard the same importunate cry from the souls under the altar (Rev. vi. 10). Many a time since, solitary sufferers, unable to penetrate the dark mysteries of Providence, waiting and watching for relief from sore burdens, have had the same exclamation wrung from their lips. What with them is a burst of impatience or the utterance of exhausted nature, on the lips of the uncreated angel is the calm reminder of Jehovah's gracious promise and eternal purpose. And his intercession being always "according to the will of God," is therefore always successful. "Good words, comforting words," soothe and cheer the tried believer, until those words are translated into deeds, and the weary length of the night is forgotten in the brightness of the dawn.

4. Forbearance is not forgiveness. To the outward observer in Zechariah's day it looked as if prosperity was all on the side of the heathen world. Quiet reigned in all quarters, and divine justice seemed asleep. But it was only the calm before the storm. God is eternal, and therefore never in haste, and never slack as men count slackness. He can afford to wait. Kings and rulers take counsel together against Him and his Anointed; with malice and rage they help forward the affliction of Zion; but He that sitteth in the heavens laughs (Ps. ii. 4). "Who thought," said Luther, "when Christ suffered and the Jews triumphed, that God was laughing all the time?" Since He knows that his enemies cannot escape He suffers them to proceed long with impunity. Often He uses them as instruments to chastise his own people, but when the chastisement has been inflicted, He breaks the rod and casts it into the fire. The quiet of the old Persian world was soon broken by a succession of strokes which scattered and destroyed all the persecutors of the Church. But Zion lived and grew and extended, until she became the most potent factor in all human society; and to-day is lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes to fill the whole earth.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Pressel: The Church militant does not stand alone; there is always at its side the Church triumphant. (1.) It often appears to us as if it stood alone, and then we are misled either to despondency, as if our labor and hope were vain, or to self-confidence, as if the result depended upon our running or willing. (2.) But no, the Church triumphant stands at its side and watches while we sleep; and He who is its Head and ours, brings our prayers before the Father.

Moore: The hour of darkest desolation to the Church, and of haughtiest triumph to her enemies, is often the very hour when God begins his work

of judgment on the one, and returning mercy on the other.

CALVIN: When the servant of Elisha saw not the chariots in the air, he became almost lost in despair; but his despair was instantly removed when he saw so many angels ready at hand for help (2 Kings vi. 17); so whenever God declares that angels are ministers for our safety, He means to animate our faith. At the same time He does not send us to angels, but this one thing is enough, that when God is propitious all the angels have a care for our salvation.

VISION II. THE FOUR HORNS AND FOUR SMITHS.

CHAPTER I. 18-21.

A. *Four Horns which scattered the People of God* (vers. 18, 19). B. *Four Smiths which cast down these Horns* (vers. 20, 21).

18-19 And I lifted up my eyes and saw, and behold, four horns. And I said to the
angel that talked with me, What are these? And he said to me, These are the
20 horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. And Jehovah showed
21 me four smiths. And I said, What come these to do? And he said thus,[1] These
are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that[2] no man lifted up his head, but
these are come to terrify them, to cast out[3] the horns of the nations which lifted
up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 21. — אֵלֶּה הַקְּרָנוֹת is not an absolute nominative which would require a different construction, but to be rendered just as the same phrase is in ver. 19.

2 Ver. 21. — כְּפִי, supply אֲשֶׁר = so that. This is a rare use of the form, but it is allowed by nearly all critics.

3 Ver. 21. — יַדּוֹת. Prof. Cowles says that this word has the sense *cast down to the ground*, but none of the instances of its use (Jer. l. 14; Lam. iii. 53, etc.) will bear a stronger sense than *cast* or *cast out*.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This vision carries forward the assurance given in the one before it, by showing the provision made for repelling the foes of the covenant people.

Ver. 1. **I lifted up my eyes.** After seeing the first vision, the Prophet had sunk down in meditation. Again he raises his eyes, **and behold, four horns.** The horn is a common Scriptural symbol of strength, and in the prophecies usually represents a kingdom or political power. Do these four horns refer to just so many kings or empires which oppressed the covenant people? Not a few expositors answer in the affirmative, but they differ widely in the designation of these opposing powers. Cyril names Pul, Salmaneser, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar; Grotius, the Persian Kings, Alexander, Antiochus, and Ptolemy; Pressel, Assyria, Chaldæa, Egypt, and Persia; but the greater number refer to the four great empires predicted by Daniel, so Jerome, Kimchi, Hengstenberg, Keil, Baumgarten, Wordsworth. It is not a sufficient objection to this last view, to say with Henderson and Köhler, that of these powers two were not in existence at this time, and cannot have been spoken of, because the hostility described in the vision had already taken place; for the vision might very well have included the future as well as the past. A more serious objection is that each of these destroyed its predecessor, whereas in the vision the smiths are represented as distinct from the horns. And besides, neither the Persian nor Alexander were enemies of the Jews. It is better, therefore, with the majority of interpreters (Theodoret, Calvin, Umbreit, Hitzig, Maurer, Köhler), to refer the number four to the cardinal points of the compass, and thus make it include all possible enemies. As a matter of fact the people of God had enemies on all sides, the Assyrian, Chaldean, and Samaritan on the north, the Egyptian on the south, Philistines on the west, and Moabites and Ammonites on the east. These foes scattered **Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem,** *i. e.*, the twelve tribes in their completeness, with special mention for the sake of emphasis, of the capital city. The objection to this founded upon the lack of אֶת before the last substantive (Keil) is of no force, as that sign of the definite object may be inserted or omitted at pleasure, Deut. xii. 6 (Green *H. G.*, § 270 b).

Ver. 20. **The Prophet saw four smiths.** The LXX. render חָרָשִׁים, τέκτονες, whence our E. V., "carpenters." The Vulgate gives *fabri*, which corresponds exactly to the Hebrew, but in view of the work assigned to these persons, most expositors render the term *smiths*. **No man lifted up his head** = all were in an utterly prostrate condition. **To scatter it** = its inhabitants. The four smiths simply express the various powers which God raises up and employs to overthrow the agencies which are hostile to his people. There is no indication in the passage itself what these powers are, and there seems to be no need to seek information elsewhere. The point of the entire

vision lies in the coincidence of the numbers of the horns and the smiths. For every horn there was a smith to beat it down. The Church then could rest calmly in the assurance that every hostile power that rose in opposition should be judged and destroyed by the Lord. The primary reference was of course to the work of the Jews in restoring the city and completing the Temple, but this did not exhaust the meaning of this very simple but significant symbol. It had as wide a sweep as the corresponding verbal statement of Isaiah (liv. 17), "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." Zion's God controls all persons and powers and events; and through the long tract of the Church's history it will be seen that for every evil there is a remedy; and for every enemy a deliverer. The horn will arise and do its work, but the smith will also appear and do his work.

It is worthy of observation that what the angel in ver. 19 calls "Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem," he calls in ver. 21 simply "Judah." So that here is a clear and indubitable proof, in the first part of the Book whose post-exile origin is unquestioned, that Israel is used, not to denote distinctively the northern kingdom, but merely to round out the view of what was left of the entire covenant people after the restoration. This bears upon the similar use of "Israel" and "Ephraim" in the second part of these prophecies.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The Church of God on earth exists in the midst of conflict. There always have appeared horns which attempt to scatter it. A halcyon period sometimes is found like that mentioned in Acts ix. 31, "Then had the Churches [true text, Church] rest throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria," but its normal state is that of a struggle against numerous and mighty foes. The Saviour came not to send peace on earth but a sword. The carnal mind is enmity with God, and the flashing of truth upon an unregenerate conscience must needs provoke wrath. Hence the bloody tracks which so often occur in the records of the past. There has never been any considerable period since our Lord's ascension, in which persecution of his followers has not existed in some quarter of the earth. Even now it is found in the remote east, in the Turkish Empire and in the Baltic Provinces of Russia. True believers are tossed on the horns of furious foes. Their course lies through a storm to the haven, through a battle to the crown. Let them not "count it a strange thing" when even a fiery trial befalls them. Such an experience belongs to the fixed purpose of God.

2. Conflict does not mean defeat. The very same voice which announces the gory horn, sets forth the agency which is to crush it. The character of this agency varies indefinitely. One horn may be used to destroy another horn, or a totally different instrument may be employed, but in either case the result is the same. Such an equilibrium between assault and defense is maintained that the Church is indestructible. One heathen ruler persecuted, another protected and restored. So in the conflicts of the early Church and of the Reformation, for every formidable horn there was found an equally formidable smith. Thus, too, in the organized attacks of Deism, Rationalism, and Scientific Atheism, at first the air was filled with the shouts of victory, but the rejoicing was premature. In every instance, the head of the Church raised up, sometimes in an unexpected quarter, a workman who needed not to be ashamed, who successfully vindicated the old truth and put to flight the armies of the alien.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Jay: We see from this that the friends of Zion are as numerous as her foes; that her defense is equal to her danger; and that as the state of his people requires it, the Lord will seasonably raise up means and instruments for their succor and deliverance. The assurance may be derived from four principles: the love of God; the power of God; the faithfulness of God; the conduct of God. In the first we see that He must be inclined to appear for them as they are infinitely dear to Him. In the second, we see that He is able to do it. In the third, that He is engaged to do it, and his promise cannot be broken. In the fourth, that He always has done it, Scripture, history, and experience being witness.

Then let the world forbear their rage,
The Church renounce her fear;
Israel must live through every age,
And be the Almighty's care.

Calvin: The Prophet by asking the angel (ver. 19), sets before us the example of a truly teachable disposition. Though the Lord does not immediately explain his messages, there is no reason for us disdainfully to reject what is obscure as many do in our day, who complain that God's Word is ambiguous and extremely difficult. The Prophet although perplexed did not morosely turn away, but asked the angel. And though the angels are not nigh us or at least do not visibly appear, yet God can by other means afford us help when it is needed. He promises to give the Spirit of understanding and wisdom. If then, we do not neglect the word and sacraments, and especially if we ask for the guidance of the Spirit, there is nothing obscure or intricate in the prophecies which He will not make known so far as is necessary.

VISION III. THE MAN WITH THE MEASURING LINE.

Chapter II.

A. *A Man with a Measuring Line, and its Meaning* (vers. 1–5). B. *Further Promises* (vers. 6–13).

1 And I lifted up my eyes[1] and saw, and behold, a man, and in his hand a meas-
2 uring-line. And I said, Whither goest thou? And he said to me, To measure
3 Jerusalem, to see what is its breadth and what its length. And behold the angel
4 that talked with me came forth and another angel went forth to meet him, And
said to him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall lie as open country[2] for the multitude of men and cattle in the midst of her.

5 And I will be to her, saith Jehovah, a wall of fire around,
And for glory will I be in the midst of her.
6 Ho! ho! flee out of the land of the north, saith Jehovah,
For as[3] the four winds of heaven have I scattered you, saith Jehovah.
7 Ho![4] Zion, save thyself,
Thou that dwellest with[5] the daughter of Babylon.
8 For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
After glory hath He sent me to the nations that plundered you,
For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple[6] of his[7] eye.
9 For behold, I swing my hand over them,
And they shall become a spoil to their own servants,
And ye shall know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me.
10 Shout and rejoice, O daughter of Zion,
For, behold, I come, and dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah,
11 And many nations shall join themselves[8] to Jehovah in that day,
And become a people to me,
And I will dwell in the midst of thee,
And thou shalt know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me to thee.
12 And Jehovah shall take Judah as his portion in the holy land,
And shall yet[9] choose Jerusalem.
13 Be still, all flesh, before Jehovah,
For He has risen up from his holy habitation.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — There is nothing in Hebrew to correspond to the "again" in the E. V.

2 Ver. 4. — פְּרָזוֹת, lit. = *plains*, here denotes open level ground, in contrast with walled and fortified cities. See the full expression in Ezek. xxxviii. 11.

3 Ver. 6. — The various reading ב in "כְּאַר, is sustained by a number of MSS. and the Vulgate, but is inferior to the Textus Receptus.

4 Ver. 7. — This verse begins with the same interjection, הוֹי, which occurs at the beginning of the preceding verse, and should be so rendered, and not confounded, as in the E. V., with the mere sign of the vocative.

5 Ver. 7. — יֹשֶׁבֶת, construed directly with the accusative, is found also in Ps. xxii. 4, 2 Sam. vi. 2.

6 Ver. 8. — בָּבַת. The prevailing opinion derives this from בּוּב or בָּבַב, and makes it = *entrance*, or gate to the eye, its centre-point.

7 Ver. 8. — The reading עֵינִי, though given in several MSS. and sustained by the Vulgate, appears to be due to a copyist's correction.

8 Ver. 11. — The reflexive sense of the Niphal in נִלְווּ is much more suitable and expressive than the simple passive.

9 Ver. 12. — עוֹד, in the same connection, in i. 17, is rendered in E. V. *yet*, while here it appears as *again*. It is better rendered *yet* in both places, the sense being not that God will make a new choice, but that He will demonstrate again in actual experience his old choice. Ps. lxxviii. 68, lxxxvii. 2.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

As the second vision represented the destruction of Israel's foes, the third makes an advance by setting forth the enlargement and security of the Covenant people. (*a.*) Vers. 1–5 contain the symbol; (*b.*), vers. 6–13 the fuller explanation of its meaning, namely, the despoiling of the nations (vers. 6–9), the indwelling of Jehovah in Zion (ver. 10), and the ingathering of many nations (vers. 11–13).

(*a.*) *The Symbol and its General Sense* (vers. 1–5). Vers. 1, 2. **And I lifted up my eyes. . . . what its length.** The prophet sees a man with a measuring-line in his hand advancing upon the scene, and he asks whither he is going. The answer is that he is about to **measure** the length and breadth of Jerusalem. This man is not to be identified with the interpreting angel (Rosenmüller, Maurer, etc.), for the latter is plainly distinguished from him in ver. 3; nor does the passage furnish any reason for regarding him as the Angel of the Lord (Keil, Hengstenberg, etc.). He is rather simply a person introduced to perform the symbolical action of the vision, and having done this, he passes out of view. His mission is to ascertain by measurement the present size of Jerusalem, with a view to its prospective indefinite enlargement. This view is not stated by him, but is clearly to be inferred from ver. 4, and the general tenor of the chapter.

Ver. 3. After the measuring angel has gone away to do his office, **behold,** *i. e.*, the prophet sees "the angel that talked with me" **coming forth,** *i. e.*, from the back-ground of the scene, and probably, as Köhler suggests, from the direction in which the measuring angel had disappeared. Before, however, the interpreting angel can either address or be addressed by the prophet, he is met by a third angel coming from the opposite direction. The character of this third angel is not further described, but from the tone of authority, "Run, speak," etc., and from vers. 8, 9, it seems not unlikely that he is the Angel of the Lord (Neumann, Pressel, etc.). There are no data for a positive opinion.

Ver. 4. **And said to him.** The subject here can only be, whether grammatically or logically, the third angel. His direction tells the *angelus interpres* to do just what his function required. **This young man** = the prophet himself, as most of the earlier and later expositors conceive. Zechariah is thus styled because of his age, and not, as Jerome, Vitringa, and Hengstenberg think, because of his subordinate relation to the angels, which is nowhere else thus expressed. **Run,** because it is good news. The substance of the good news is that Jerusalem is to have a vast influx of **men and cattle,** so that it shall no longer be confined by narrow walls and fixed limits, but be spread out like **the open country.** Cf. Is. xlix. 19, 20.

Ver. 5. **And I will be to her,** etc. But it might be feared that great danger would result from this unwalled extension. This is met by the promise that Jehovah would be **a wall of fire around,** perhaps in allusion to the pillar of fire in the wilderness (cf. Is. iv. 5). The fire would consume every invader. There should be, however, not only protection without, but **glory within.** This splendor is to arise from the manifested presence of God (cf. Is. lx. 19). The full force of this promise is to be gathered from the following verses.

(*b.*) *Fuller Explanation of the Symbol* (vers. 6–13). Vers. 6, 7. **Ho, ho, flee out . . . . daughter of Babylon.** An assurance of Jehovah's presence and blessing with his people is given in the announcement of judgment upon Babylon; and this is expressed very strikingly in the form of a summons to the Jews still remaining in the Chaldæan capital to flee away in haste lest they should be overtaken by the coming storm. There were, no doubt, many Jews who, because of age or infirmities or ties of property, preferred to remain in Babylon rather than risk the hardships of the restoration; but the call of the text seems intended not so much for their benefit as to show to the desponding people in Palestine how severe a blow impended over their former oppressors. **Land of the north.** Babylon was so called because armies and caravans coming thence to Jerusalem entered the Holy Land from the north **For as the four winds,** etc., assigns the reason why such a return was possible. God had scattered Israel not *to* the four winds, but *as* them, *i. e.*, with a violence and fury such as would result from the combined force of all the winds of heaven. Keil's explanation of פֵּרַשׂ as = a beneficent diffusion, is not sustained by the usage of the verb, and is against the context. **Ho! Zion!** etc. Zion stands for the inhabitants of Zion, *i. e.*, the people of God, who are now still dwelling with the daughter of Babylon, *i. e.*, the people of that city personified as a woman (Ps. ix. 14, cxxxvii. 8).

Vers. 8, 9. Further reason of the call to flee from Babylon. **After glory.** Gesenius, Maurer, and others strangely construe this, *He hath sent me after glory,* in the sense of with a view to acquire it. This is quite inadmissible, not because אַחַר is not used as a preposition (Moore), for it is often so employed, but because it is never construed with a verb of motion in this sense, and the verb in the text has its appropriate object and preposition immediately following. We must therefore, following the LXX. and the Vulgate, render "after glory" = after the bestowment of the glory stated in ver. 5. The speaker was sent to these plundering nations to execute God's judgments upon them. The reason for this mission is announced in the last clause of the verse by a beautiful and touching image, borrowed from Ps. xvii. 8; cf. Deut. xxxii. 10. **The apple,** literally, the gate, through which light enters the eye, hence = pupil. The pupil or apple of the eye is a proverbial type of that which is at once most precious and most easily injured, and which therefore has a double claim to the most careful protection. The pronominal suffix **his** is to be referred to Jehovah, and not to the enemy himself.

Ver. 9. **For, behold . . . . servants,** furnishes an additional explanation of the sending after glory. The Angel of the Lord would swing his hand (cf. Is. xi. 15, xix. 16), as a gesture of menace or a symbol of miraculous power, over the nations, so that they should become — וְהָיוּ expresses consequence — a spoil to the Israelites, who had before been obliged to serve them. A close parallel is found in Is. xiv. 2. **And ye shall know . . . . sent me.** By the execution of this judgment it would be made clear to Israel that Jehovah had sent his angel. They would know the fact not only by faith, but by experience.

Vers. 10–12. The people are summoned to rejoice over the Lord's indwelling and its happy results. **Behold, I come.** The glorification is about to commence. Jehovah comes to Zion to take up

his abode, and this is the pledge of all conceivable blessedness The close resemblance of the language used here to that in ch. ix. 9, suggests that both refer to the same form of Jehovah's tabernacling with men, namely, the incarnation. Even Kimchi refers the passage to "future events in the times of the Messiah." This is further confirmed by the next verse. **And many nations**, etc. The Kingdom of God, instead of being confined to Israel, will be enlarged by the reception of numerous heathen peoples (ch. viii. 20, 21; Is. ii. 3, xvi. 1; Micah iv. 2). The two latter clauses of this verse are emphatic repetitions of what has been said in the same words in vers. 9, 10.

Ver. 12. **And Jehovah will take**, etc. The speaker reverts to the ancient declaration, Deut. xxxii. 9, "Jehovah's portion is his people, Jacob the lot of his inheritance," and announces its complete fulfillment through the coming of the Lord. The **holy land** is of course, Palestine, but only in the first instance. Wherever the people of God are found, there is the holy land. Israel is to overflow by the large additions made to it, so that its original territory will be too small. The new aggregate shall inherit all the blessings promised to the original chosen nation. The same thought is conveyed in the other member of the parallelism.

Ver. 13 furnishes a sublime close to the chapter. **Be still . . . habitation.** All flesh is summoned to wait in reverential silence the coming of the Lord to his work, and the reason assigned is that it is soon to begin. For Jehovah has risen up from his holy habitation, which is heaven (cf. Deut. xxvi. 15; 2 Chron. xxx. 27). Illustrative parallels of the sentiment are found in Ps. lxxvi. 8, 9: "The earth feared and was still, when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth," and Zeph. i. 7: "Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God, for the day of the LORD is at hand." Here the contrast is emphatic between men, even all of them, who are but *flesh*, and the everliving Jehovah. Calvin thinks that the temple rather than heaven is meant by the holy habitation, and that the point is, that even from that desolated place, exposed to the derision of the ungodly, God would come forth to judgment. But it is better to adhere to the usual meaning of the expression, and to understand the contrast as being between God rising up in heaven, and all flesh on the earth. The divine majesty has seemed to be asleep, but now it is roused up; let men therefore beware.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. Pressel justly remarks that although at first view this vision appears to resemble those which were received by Ezekiel (xl. 3 ff.), and John (Rev. xi. 1), yet in reality it is very different. In the latter cases the imagery seems to have a fixed and definite meaning, however difficult it may be to ascertain and state that meaning; in the former the symbolical action is of the simplest kind, and serves merely to give vividness to the subsequent oral statement. Whenever a house or a city is to be enlarged, the first step is to make an adequate survey of the existing buildings. The divine condescension uses this preliminary measurement outwardly represented, as a token of a future indefinite expansion which would leave the surveyor's lines far in the rear as a thing of the past. The entire chapter is an admirable illustration of the germinant nature of prophecy. In its primary aspect it met directly the situation of the Prophet's contemporaries and animated them to new zeal and hope in their endeavors to restore the national capital, and reëstablish the former civil and ecclesiastical institutions. Yet it manifestly cannot be restricted to this. The incorporation of many nations with the Jews, as set forth in ver. 11, had no counterpart in the actual experience of the Jewish commonwealth as such. It was fulfilled only in the rapid and general diffusion of the Gospel by which multitudes of the heathen were turned from dumb idols to serve the living God. Yet the prophet passes without a break from the narrower to the larger scope of his prediction. They to whom it was first given may have found it difficult to see the exact nexus of events; but to us who live at a time when Providence has interpreted promise, it is easy to trace the way in which the Spirit leads Zechariah from a temporary act of consolation to a declaration which sets forth one of the chief glories of Messiah's blessed reign. The narrow walls of the Mosaic forms were to be thrown down, and the church's limits extended to those who were then far beyond those boundaries. Moore speaks of it as at least a curious coincidence that when this enlargement did take place the centres of population were the first to experience the blessing, and so the dwellers in villages (*pagani*) became synonymous with those who still remained in heathenism; but at last the Gospel reached and converted those very *paganos* (pagans); and then in very deed Jerusalem inhabited the villages or was spread out as the open country.

2. The twofold blessing of Jehovah to his Church. Nowhere even in Scripture is this set forth with so much beauty and force as in the concise statement that He is a wall of fire without and a glory within. What deep moats or massive walls or elaborate defenses are comparable to a circle of flame, fed by no human hands, ensuring destruction to the assailant before he can even reach the presence of those he seeks to attack? The Psalmist uses a striking figure when he says (cxxv. 2), "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever." But the hills which arose around Jerusalem might be scaled, or commanded from a still higher elevation. Not so with devouring fire; that is an impassable barrier. The promise then is complete; all that is needed is faith to appropriate it. As Luther says, "If we were surrounded by walls of steel and fire, we would feel secure, and defy the devil. But the property of faith is not to be proud of what the eye sees but of what the word reveals." The one prayer suitable for times of darkness or despondency, is that of the disciples, *Lord, increase our faith.*

But the assurance of Jehovah is not only for outward, but also for inward wants, and that in a most remarkable and comprehensive way. He Himself will be for a glory within. As the Psalmist says, God is in the midst of her. Zion's true boast is not in buildings or services, in music or eloquence, in numbers or popularity, but in the manifested presence of her great Head. If his Holy Spirit reveal his power in cheering the bowed down, in sanctifying the afflicted, in quickening penitence, prayerfulness, holy living, and the usual expressions of a gracious character, in calling dead sinners from their living tombs, in elevating the general tone of piety, in renewing the lost image in which man was originally created, then there is

glory far, far beyond what earth can give. The Psalmist said (cii. 16), "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He will appear in glory." We may reverently reverse the clauses, and affirm that when He appears in glory, Zion shall be built up. Let Him come when He will and as He will, his presence is enough.

3. God's people are unspeakably dear to Him. They are like the apple of his eye. He chooses them as his portion, He guards them as his jewels. The pupil of the eye is peculiarly delicate and sensitive. It is not necessary to pierce it with a knife to make the owner shrink; a mote, or even a touch will startle and grieve. So the blessed Lord feels toward those whom He has chosen and called. In all their affliction He is afflicted. When Jesus remonstrated with Saul of Tarsus for his furious enmity toward the infant Church, the language was, "Why persecutest thou *me?*" Every blow, struck at the least or humblest member of the body, reaches its invisible but glorious head. In like manner whatever is done for the people of God is regarded by God as done for Himself. He "is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have showed toward his name, *in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister*" (Heb. vi. 10). This is not the estimate of the world at large. They look down upon believers as deluded visionaries, or at best amiable enthusiasts, while sometimes the carnal heart finds expression in much harsher terms. So much the more necessary is it to remember the Lord's judgment in the case, and to feel and act toward those who bear the Christian name and walk accordingly, as to those who, whatever their outward surroundings, are loved by their Lord with an affection beyond what even a mother bears to the son of her womb.

The whole history of the Church is a comment upon this utterance. From the time of its institution in the household of Abraham, when latent in Egypt, wandering in the desert, militant in Canaan, triumphant in Jerusalem, captive in Babylon, oppressed under the Syrians and Romans, it was sustained by heavenly food, by visions and inspirations, by miracles and portents, by God's effective support on the right hand and the left. Afterwards, when revived and renewed by the personal ministry and blessed sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, it was brought into still closer fellowship with the Most High, fitted for unlimited diffusion, proclaimed to all the world, and established alike among the loftiest and the lowliest of the earth. And though tried in every possible way by malice and envy, it was only purged by suffering, confirmed and rooted by the storms of persecution, and protected against all the powers of earth and hell by an arm which even the blind may see belongs to none but the living God.

4. The introduction of *nations* into the fellowship of the people of God is one of the grand peculiarities of the later dispensation. In earlier days the Church was far less restrictive that it is often supposed to have been. Not a few outside of the chosen line obtained entrance to the community. Not only Hobab, and Rahab, and Ruth, and Gittai, but many others found a home in Zion; still in all cases they were required to leave their original home, to forget their father's house, and transplant themselves to the seat of the theocracy. But now the good news goes to the heathen instead of their coming to it. The various tribes and families whom God so carefully separated (Acts xvii. 26), although they were of one blood, still retain their distinct national existence, but on receiving the Gospel are counted as seed of the promise. A very remarkable Psalm (lxxxvii. 4) speaks of these collective bodies as subjects of regeneration. "I will mention Rahab and Babylon as knowing me. Lo, Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia. (As to each of these it shall be said,) This one was born there." These ruling powers among the heathen, most of them hereditary enemies of Israel, are given as samples of the whole Gentile world. Not individuals alone, but whole nations are to experience a spiritual birth, and in consequence join themselves to Jehovah. Not by force of outward compulsion, but by the power of an inward conviction. The flocks of Kedar and the rams of Nebaioth with good will (or of their own accord) ascend the altar of Jehovah (Is. lx. 7). It is of course true that conversions are effected individually and not *en masse*, but these are to be so multiplied that a little one becomes a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. The history of modern missions has furnished repeated instances in which a whole people has been revolutionized and made as distinctively Christian as it before had been heathen. It needs only a farther development of divine grace in the same direction to fill out in reality the most glowing pictures sketched on the prophetic canvass.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

PRESSEL: A fine illustration of the defense which Jehovah is to his people is furnished in the experience of a widow who alone with her daughter occupied a house standing by itself in the direct way of the Russian army on its march to Schleswick, and comforted her weeping, despairing daughter with the assurance that the Lord could and would protect them from all harm. The same night a heavy fall of snow so covered all approaches to the house that when the army marched on the next day it was not visited or apparently seen by even one of the licentious soldiery. A wall of snow was as effectual as a wall of fire.

MOORE: The true glory of the Church is not in any external pomp or power of any kind. Her outward rites and ceremonies, therefore, should only be what the earth's atmosphere is to the rays of the sun, — a pure, transparent medium of transmission.

— Delay of punishment is no proof of impunity. God often seems asleep when He is only awaiting the appointed time; but in the end, when all seems as it was from the foundation of the world, the herald cry shall go forth, Be silent, O earth, for Jehovah is roused to his terrible work, and the day of his wrath is come.

JAY: If God regards his people so kindly and is so jealous for their welfare (ver. 8), it becomes them on the other hand to be equally concerned for his cause and his glory. We are to regard his Word as we keep the tenderest part of the tenderest member of our body. He says, "Keep my commandments and live; and *my law as the apple of thine eye*" (Prov. vii. 2).

HODGE: I will dwell in the midst of thee" (vers. 5, 10, 11). God is said to dwell wherever He specially and permanently manifests his presence. And since He thus specially and permanently manifests his presence in his people collectively and individually, He is said to dwell in all and in each. . . . . The human soul is said to be full of God when its inward state, its affections

and acts are determined and controlled by Him, so as to be a constant manifestation of the divine presence. Then it is pure, and glorious, and free, and blessed. . . . . There is unspeakably more in the promises of God than we are able to understand.

VISION IV. JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST BEFORE THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH.

CHAPTER III. 1–10.

A. *Joshua accused by Satan, but forgiven* (vers. 1–5). B. *A Promise of Protection to the High Priest, and also of the coming of Branch and its blessed Results* (vers. 6–10).

1 And he showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of Jehovah,
2 and Satan [1] standing at his right hand to oppose him.[1] And Jehovah said to Satan,
Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan, even Jehovah who chooses [2] Jerusalem rebuke thee!
3 Is not this a brand plucked from the fire? And Joshua was clothed in filthy gar-
4 ments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake to those who stood
before him, saying, Take the filthy garments away from him, and he said to him,
See, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from [3] thee, and will clothe thee with festal
5 raiment. And I said,[4] Let them put a clean [5] mitre upon his head; and they put
the clean mitre upon his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of
Jehovah was standing by.

6 And the angel of Jehovah testified [6] to Joshua, and said,
7 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
If thou wilt walk in my ways and keep my charge,
Thou shalt judge my house, and also keep my courts,
And I will give thee access [7] among these standing here.
8 Hear, I pray, O Joshua the high priest,
Thou and thy colleagues [8] who sit before thee,
For men of wonder [9] are they,
For, behold, I bring my servant, Branch.
9 For, behold the stone which I have laid before Joshua;
Upon one stone are seven eyes;
Behold I execute its carving; [10]
And I remove the iniquity of this land in one day.
10 In that day saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Ye shall invite every man his neighbor
Under the vine and under the fig tree.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — הַשָּׂטָן לְשִׂטְנוֹ. The force of this antanaclasis can hardly be expressed in a version — *the opposer to oppose him* fails to convey the force of the proper name Satan.

2 Ver. 2. — בֹּחֵר not as E. V. who "has chosen," but according to the force of the participle, who now and habitually chooses. Henderson with a marvelous lack of taste substitutes for the simple meaning, "taketh delight."

3 Ver. 4. — "From thee," *lit.*: from upon thee. The guilt or punishment of sin is conceived as a burden resting upon the sinner until forgiveness removes it.

4 Ver. 5. — For וָאֹמַר Ewald, following the Targum, Peshito, and Vulgate, proposes to read וַיֹּאמֶר, and Henderson, וְאֹמַר. But on general principles the Masoretic text is to be preferred, and especially here, where the motive of the change is obvious, and nothing is gained in clearness or emphasis by departing from the Hebrew.

5 Ver. 5. — טָהוֹר. The E. V. "fair," besides being a needless departure from the meaning of the word, fails to express the point involved in cleanness as the emblem of purity or forgiveness.

6 Ver. 6. — וַיָּעַד, a strong term, implying the importance and the certainty of the communication.

7 Ver. 7. — "Access," *lit.*, ways, *i. e.*, means of free ingress and egress among my immediate attendants. See Exeg. and Critical.

8 Ver. 8. — רֵעֶיךָ = *companions*, but as it is associates in office who are intended, *colleagues* seems the nearest equivalent.

9 Ver. 8. — מוֹפֵת is rendered *wonder* (E. V. margin), to preserve its original signification. Perhaps "men of omen" would be more easily understood.

10 Ver. 9. — פַּתֵּחַ פִּתֻּחִים *lit.*, to open openings = to carve.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The third vision lays a sure foundation for the glowing assurances and promises contained in those which precede by revealing the fact of the divine forgiveness. Sin had been the cause of all the previous troubles of Israel, and its continuance would bring them all back. Hence the need and value of the great truth expressed in the dramatic form and rich symbolism of this vision. The first half of the chapter (vers. 1–5) represents the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah and opposed by Satan; but Joshua is forgiven,—a fact which is both literally stated and also symbolically represented. In the second half (vers. 6–10), the high priest is assured of present protection, and of the future appearance of the Branch, who will remove sin at once and bestow the fullness of salvation.

(*a.*) The Symbol (vers. 1–5). Ver. 1. **And he showed me.** The subject of the verb is Jehovah, as appears from the fact that He is the last person previously mentioned, and from the parallel phrase in i. 20. It is not necessary to suppose that it is a judicial scene (Hoffman, Ewald, Köhler, Pressel) which is presented to the Prophet's view. So far as the terms used are concerned, they will apply equally well to the high priest's appearance before God in the discharge of his official functions. To "stand before Jehovah" was the technical term to denote the ordinary service of the priests (Deut. x. 8; 2 Chron. xxix. 11; Judg. xx. 28; Ezek. xliv. 15). The presumption then is that he was here not for himself only, but also and chiefly on behalf of the people, as their representative. That he was engaged in prayer is implied in the circumstances, and also in the description of Jehovah's words in ver. 4 as an *answer*. But another person appears on the scene who is called **Satan,** lit., the adversary. Some (Kimchi, Ewald) refer this to a human adversary, such as Sanballat, but the emphatic form of the term; its analogy to ὁ ἀντίδικος (1 Pet. v. 8) and ὁ κατήγωρ (Rev. xii. 10); the LXX.'s equivalent διάβολος; and the occurrence of the word in Job i., ii.; all point to the chief of the evil spirits as the person here intended. He is said to **stand on the right hand** of Joshua, not because this was the position appropriated by Jewish usage to an accuser, for no such usage can be, or at least has been, established; but because this is the most suitable place for one who wishes to impede or oppose another (Job xxx. 12; Ps. cix. 6). Satan's object is to oppose Joshua. The manner is not specifically stated, but from the next verse it seems as if Satan's work was to dwell upon the sins of the high priest and his people, and upon this ground urge their condemnation and overthrow.

Ver. 2. **And Jehovah said.** Almost all expositors agree that the angel of Jehovah is the Speaker here who takes the name of Jehovah because of the intimate and mysterious relation he sustains to Him. There is no debate between the parties, but the adversary is at once repelled with indignation. **Jehovah rebuke thee!** Instead of damaging others, he secures his own overthrow. The emphatic repetition of the exclamation indicates the certainty of Satan's failure. The other words of the verse show the ground of this failure. It is not at all in the innocence of the high priest or the people, but in the gracious purpose of Jehovah. He **chooses Jerusalem,** and that choice must stand. This is further confirmed by the question, **Is not this a brand . . . . fire?** cf. Amos iv. 11. Most expositors, ancient and modern, refer this to the exile in which Joshua had suffered, but from which he had been restored. God had rescued him for preservation not for destruction. Having snatched the brand from the flames, he did not mean to throw it back into the fire. The reference of course is to the high priest, not so much in his personal, as his representative character.

Ver. 3. **Clothed with filthy garments.** Eichhorn, Ewald, *et al.*, consider this soiled raiment designed to set forth that he was an accused person, but this is arbitrarily to transfer a Roman custom (Liv. ii. 54) to the East where not a trace of it is to be seen. In Hebrew usage such garments represent sin. Is. lxiv. 5: "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags." Sorely as the nation had been chastised, its iniquity was not wiped away. The last clause is not a superfluous repetition of what is stated in ver. 1, but indicates a patient expectancy in Joshua, that notwithstanding Satan's accusation, relief would come.

Ver. 4. **And he answered,** *i. e.*, the prayer for forgiveness involved in the fact of the high priest's appearing before the Lord. Vitringa says (on Zech. i. 11), "In every case in which עָנָה or ἀποκρίνεσθαι is placed at the opening of a speech or narrative without any question preceding it, there is always a question tacitly assumed; just as in the Books of Scripture, where they commence with the copula, some antecedent is always supposed to exist, with which the narrative or speech is tacitly contrasted, even though nothing at all has gone before." **Those who stood before him** = surely not, as Ewald maintains, the friends of the accused, but the Lord's own servants, the angels. These are ordered to remove the filthy garments, and then the angel of Jehovah explains the meaning of the symbolical act. **I have taken,** etc. This does not refer to sanctification (Mark), but to forensic forgiveness. The two cases (2 Sam. xii. 13 and xxiv. 10) establish this as the meaning of the phrase, הֶעֱבִיר עָוֹן. The festal garments may symbolize innocence (Chaldee), or joy (Köhler, Pressel), or glory (Keil).

Ver. 5. **And I said.** At this point the Prophet who had been only a silent spectator, comes suddenly forward with a prayer for the completion of the work begun, and says, **Let them put . . . . head.** It cannot be made out that any special significance attached to the mitre or turban, and the emphasis must lie upon the qualifying word **clean.** "The turban can be referred to only as an article of dress which would be the first to strike the eye"

(Hengstenberg). The wish of the Prophet was at once complied with. The last clause of the verse does not mean that the angel of the Lord rose up from his seat (Henderson, Köhler, Pressel), but that he continued **standing by,** "like a master presiding over the ceremony, approving and adorning it with his presence" (C. B. Mich.).

(*b.*) The Promise (vers. 6-10). The completion of the symbolical action is made the occasion of a further and far-reaching assurance, addressed to the high priest and through him to the nation.

Ver. 6. **Testified** = made a solemn declaration (Gen. xliii. 3; Deut. viii. 19).

Ver. 7 contains a promise with a condition. The condition is partly personal — **walk in my ways,** and partly official — **keep my charge.** The promise is altogether official. **Judge . . . courts** = administer the service in the holy place and guard the house of God from all idolatry and ungodliness. "This is here represented not as a duty but as a reward; inasmuch as activity in connection with the kingdom of God is the highest honor and greatest favor which God can confer upon any mortal" (Hengstenberg). The last clause contains an important additional promise. מַהְלְכִים is a difficult word which occurs nowhere else. (1.) Some take it as a noun, plural of מַהְלָךְ = ways, *i. e.*, ingress and egress, denoting a peculiarly free access to God among his heavenly servants (Calvin, Hitzig, Maurer, Ewald, Köhler, Fürst, etc.). (2.) Others regard it as a Chaldee form of the Piel participle of הָלַךְ, taken intransitively = walkers, *i. e.*, angels who as messengers go between the high priest and Jehovah (LXX., Vulg., Pesh., Grotius, Baumgarten). (3.) Others derive it from the Hiphil participle of the same verb, meaning = leaders or guides (Luther, Gesen., Heng., Umbreit, Dr. Riggs, etc.). Against the last two is the circumstance that Zechariah could very well have expressed that sense in regular Hebrew form; that they require an alteration of the text; and that בֵּין is required to be rendered as = מִבֵּין. I hesitatingly prefer the first. One thing is certain, that some kind of association or influence with God's immediate servants on high is here promised to the high priest.

Ver. 8. **Hear, I pray,** etc. This opening calls attention to the importance of what follows. The address is made not only to Joshua, but to his colleagues, *i. e.*, associates in the priestly office. The next clause assigns the reason for including them. They are **men of wonder,** *i. e.*, men who excite wonder in others, and thus attracting attention to themselves, become types of what is to come (cf. Is. viii. 18; xx. 3; Ezek. xii. 6; xxiv. 24-27 (Heb.). The constant exercise of priestly functions in the offering of sacrifices which had no intrinsic efficacy was a perpetual testimony of man's need of forgiveness and of God's purpose in future to satisfy the need thus made known. The objection to this view on the ground that we should expect *are ye* and not *are they*, is removed by the fact that such cases of enallage are not rare (cf. Zeph. ii. 12 (in Heb.). The reason why these typical men, Joshua and his priests, are summoned to listen, is given in the next clause, which declares that Jehovah will bring forward that antitype whose appearance would show that their typical character was founded in truth. **My servant Branch.** The antitype is described by two names taken from the earlier Prophets. One, *servant*, is of frequent occurrence in Isaiah (xlii. 1, etc.), and also in Ezek. (xxxiv. 23, 24). The other, *branch*, occurs in Jeremiah xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15, — passages which plainly lean upon Isaiah's statements xi. 1, liii. 2. The term denotes the original obscurity of this personage and the gradual development of his character. Instead of being a tall and stately tree, he is a mere branch or root-shoot. This reference had become so well understood in Zechariah's time that he uses the word as if it were a proper name, my servant Branch. That it pointed to the Messiah is admitted by the Chald. Par., and almost all expositors, ancient and modern. The suggestion of a few (Kimchi, Theodoret, Grotius, Blayney), that Zerubbabel was intended, is refuted by the fact that the Branch had not yet appeared, while Zerubbabel had; and also by the consideration that this civil governor had nothing to do with the priestly office and could not possibly be an antitype of its holders. A similar figurative description of the Messiah is found in Ezek. xvii. 22, 23. The Lord, having described the royal house of Judah as a strong and lofty cedar, which had been plucked up by the roots and left to wither and die, declares that He will take from its summit a slender twig and plant it on the mountain of the height of Israel, where the little scion shall take root, and grow, and spread, until it commands universal admiration. Every tree of the field shall own its superiority, and every fowl of heaven seek its shelter.

Ver. 9. **For behold . . . . seven eyes.** This verse assigns the reason for the fulfillment of the preceding promise. The condition of the covenant people was so deplorable that it seemed vain to expect such a blessing as the coming of the Messiah. To countervail such despondency, Jehovah of Hosts assures his people of the watchful and loving care which will secure the gracious result. The *single stone* is not the Messiah (early interpreters, Kliefoth), for he was not "laid before Joshua;" nor the foundation stone of the Temple (Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Neumann, Henderson), which had long since been laid; nor the topstone (Maurer), nor the plummet (Grotius), nor a jewel of the high priest's breast-plate (Theodoret, Baumgarten, etc.); but the covenant people, now appropriately described as lying before Joshua, who was their ecclesiastical leader. It is no objection to this view that the Messiah is elsewhere spoken of as a stone (Ps. cxviii. 22; 1 Pet. ii. 7), for sometimes the head and the body both have the same term applied to them, as in Isaiah's use of the term *servant*, where only the context can determine which of the two is meant (Is. xliv. 2; lii. 13). The **seven eyes** may denote, either the all-embracing providence of God, or (according to the statement in Rev. v. 6 of the seven eyes of the Lamb which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth) the seven-fold radiations of the Spirit of Jehovah, by which the stone is preserved and prepared for its glorious destination. I see no reason why both may not be combined. According to this view, the eyes are not engraved on the stone, but directed toward it (cf. Ps. xxxii. 8; Jer. xxxix. 12 for this use of עַל). Ewald (*Geschichte d. V. I.*, iv. 239) sees in this verse a distinct evidence of Zoroastrian ideas. He says the conception of the seven eyes of Jehovah was derived from the Persian notion of the seven Amshaspands who surround the throne of the Supreme, and adds in a note that the upper servants of a great king were often called his eyes

and his ears. How far-fetched is this? The Hebrews were familiar with the term eyes of God or Jehovah, and meant by it just what all men mean by it; and the number seven had for ages been well known to them as a symbol of sacredness and completeness. See the excursus at the end of this section. The passage is perfectly intelligible on the supposition that Zechariah had never even heard of such a thing as the seven Amshaspands of the Zend-avesta. **Execute its carving** = make it a beautiful and costly stone. So most expositors from Calvin to Pressel. The last clause completes the brilliant promise. **This land,** *i. e.*, the land of Israel, which of course includes its inhabitants, and they stand for the whole Church of which they were then the representatives. The guilt is to be removed in **one day,** which can hardly be any other than the great day of atonement at Golgotha. The phrase is analogous to the "once for all" in Hebrews vii. 27, x. 10. It presents a contrast between the continually repeated sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood and the one final and effectual sacrifice of the Messiah.

Ver. 10. **Ye shall invite . . . . fig tree.** The result of this is expressed in a proverbial phrase borrowed from the older Scriptures, where it first occurs in the description of the happy period under Solomon (1 Kings iv. 25). "Whether it is to be taken literally or spiritually here has been much contested, the Rabbins favoring the former view, the Fathers the latter. We rightly combine both, and maintain that this picture of peaceful prosperity and cordial union is realized, although imperfectly, yet just as far as Christ's kingdom has its proper influence and the communion of saints is felt" (Pressel).

The entire vision and promise were admirably adapted to effect their end. The high priest conquers his fierce antagonist, is assured of his forgiveness and confirmed in his office, and is certified of the continuance of the people until the appearance of the long expected Branch, who once for all and forever would take away the guilt and punishment of sin.

The Number Seven. The question why the eyes spoken of in ver. 9, whatever their meaning, should be stated as seven, brings up for consideration the peculiar significance of this number. Its employment here and in the next chapter (ver. 2, seven lamps and seven pipes, ver. 10, those seven), are instances of a usage at once very ancient and very wide spread. Leaving out of view the literature of India, Persia, and Arabia, we find in Scripture an extraordinary frequency of its occurrence. *Seven, seventh,* and *sevenfold* are found in the Old Testament and the New, not less than three hundred and eighty-three times, while a similar enumeration of the instances in which *six* and *eight* are used, reaches the sum of only one hundred and seventy-six, or less than one half of the sevens. This usage begins with the first book of the Bible and ends only with the last. We find in Genesis the seven days of creation; seven-fold vengeance denounced for Cain; clean beasts and fowls received into the ark by sevens; the dove despatched from the ark at intervals of seven days; Jacob serving seven years for a wife he did not want, and seven more for the wife he did want; and seven fat kine and seven lean, seven good ears and seven thin, representing the seven years of plenty and famine. In the Mosaic ritual, many sacrifices required seven victims, and often the blood was required to be sprinkled seven times. Not only the seventh day was holy, but the seventh week of the year (a week of weeks); and the seventh month; and the seventh or Sabbatical year; and the Jubilee or the year following seven weeks of years, were all marked by festival observances. Jericho was overthrown by a march of the people seven successive days around the walls, headed by seven priests who blew as many trumpets. On the seventh day the circuit was made seven times, and then at the shout of the people the walls fell. Samson gave the Philistines of Timnath seven days to solve his riddle, he was bound with seven withes, and his seven locks were woven with the web. Seven years of famine were inflicted in Elisha's time, and the same offered as an alternative to David. The Psalmist praised God seven times a day, the just man falls seven times and rises again, Nebuchadnezzar's furnace was heated seven times more than it was wont. In the Apocalypse, the recurrence is still more marked. A condensed summation reports that there are two sevens in the introduction, namely, seven churches and seven spirits, and in the body of the work two sevens of sevens, namely, first, seven candlesticks, stars, seals, horns, eyes, trumpets, thunders; and secondly, seven angels, heads, crowns, plagues, vials, mountains, kings.

Of the fact that this number is exceedingly prominent there can be no question. The precise ground of the prominence is not so easily stated. The late Professor Hadley, from whose article[1] on the subject our statement is drawn, enumerated five different theories. One is the Arithmetical, used by Philo the Jew, and based upon the peculiar property of seven as compared with any other of the digits. A second, the Chronological, is founded upon the early division of time into weeks. A third, the Symbolic, conceives seven to be the union of two numbers, namely, *three*, which symbolizes the divine, since the Godhead is a trinity, and *four*, which symbolizes the cosmical, the created universe of space, this being determined by the four cardinal points of the compass. The seven then represents that reunion of the world with God, which is the great aim and crowning consummation of all true religion. A fourth is the Physiological theory, tracing the preëminence of the seven to the fact that there are seven parts of the body, namely, the head, chest, and loins, with the four limbs; and seven openings of the head, namely, the three pairs of eyes, ears, and nostrils, with the mouth; and further, that the seventh, fourteenth, and twenty-first days are critical periods in diseases. The fifth hypothesis is based on Astronomical reasons. The nocturnal heavens offered to the men of primitive times a constant and impressive spectacle. Here they could not but be struck by the seven members of the planetary system, as well as by the fact that the fixed stars exhibited the same number in several of the most brilliant constellations, *e. g.*, the Great Bear or Charles' Wain, the *Septentriones* of the Romans; the Lesser Bear with its remarkable pole-star; the Pleiades with their "sweet influences," and the Hyades, whose frequent rains "vex the sea."

Upon the whole, in view of the antiquity of the usage and the character of the early Hebrews, it seems most natural to trace their sense of its sacredness and completeness to its original associations with the times and means of religious worship.

1 *Essays Philological and Critical.* New York, 1873.

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL.

1. This chapter contains one of the passages in the Old Testament in which the great spiritual adversary of God and man is spoken of under the name Satan. The other places are 1 Chron. xxi. 1 and the prologue to the book of Job. (The word שָׂטָן occurs also in 2 Sam. xix. 23 and Ps. cix. 6, but it is extremely doubtful whether it is used in these passages in any other than an appellative sense = adversary.) It is a favorite notion with "the later criticism," that Zechariah imported his conception of Satan from the Zoroastrian doctrine of Ahriman, the original source of all moral and physical evil, the chief of malignant spirits, the king of darkness and of death, and consequently the eternal enemy of Ormuzd, and of his kingdom of light. But there is neither historical nor logical foundation for this fancy. During the very few years which elapsed between the Persian conquest of Babylon and the appearance of Zechariah as a prophet, there was not time for the theological notions of the Zend-avesta to penetrate the Jewish mind and to color its conceptions of the unseen world. The dualism of Zoroaster must have had a most extraordinary degree of self-propagating power, to pass in so short a time from the central point of the Persian Empire to one of its farthest outlying provinces. Besides, Zechariah's doctrine of Satan differs fundamentally from the Persian conception of Ahriman. The latter is an independent, eternal, and self-existent principle, whereas the former is a created, fallen, malignant being, of vast capacity and immense power of mischief, but still under the control of the Almighty, often thwarted in his machinations, and destined one day to an utter and disastrous overthrow. Nor had Zechariah any need to learn from the Persian theology. The existing precedents in the sacred books of the Jews furnished him with all the materials necessary to construct or to understand the symbolical vision vouchsafed to him. What he sees is the head and representative of the nation in sacred things standing in solemn service before the Angel of Jehovah, who is attended by a train of angelic ministers (ver. 7), while over against this important official stands Satan accusing and opposing; and in the end Jehovah rebukes the adversary and favors his own servant. Manifestly this corresponds in form and in substance to what is contained in the prologue of the book of Job, the date of which is allowed on all hands not to be later than the Solomonic era.

A remarkable confirmation of this view is given in the New Testament, where (Rev. xii. 10) Satan is called "the accuser of our brethren, who accuses [ὁ κατηγορῶν] them before our God day and night." Accusation is the element of his being. He accuses God to men (cf. Gen. iii. 4, 5), and he accuses men to God (as in Job and in this passage). Hence his usual name in the New Testament, *Diabolus*, from διαβάλλειν = to set at variance, namely, by slander, — a descriptive title quite as strong as the Hebrew term, Satan = opposer, the inherent and everlasting adversary of God and man, and of all that is good. This antagonism, however, takes a particular form which runs through all the Scripture from Genesis to Revelation, and is seen not dimly in our prophet. In the curse pronounced in the Garden of Eden upon the tempter, the Old Serpent (Rev. xii. 9), God declared that He would put enmity between him and the woman, and not only that, but "between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The seed of Satan are all the ungodly, of whom he is the head; the seed of the woman are all the godly, of whom Christ is the head. These two heads stand in mortal conflict; both suffer, but the one only in the extremities, the other in a vital part. "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John iii. 8). In the end the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ will be too much for the craft and malice of Satan. Still that malignant being opposes the truth, and leaves no stone unturned to turn away God's favor from his people, and thus overthrow the entire redemptive economy. This is the point of the symbolical vision here. Did the Lord cast off his people entirely and recall his promised grace, the historical basis for the Messiah to come would perish, and no room be left for his appearance according to the ancient predictions. The issue, then, was vital. It did not concern an individual merely; it did not belong only to some one particular crisis in the history of the restored exiles; but it touched the very existence of the Kingdom of God on earth. If the confessed sins of Israel were sufficient to secure their final rejection from God at that stage of their history, the hopes of the race were blasted, and the prospect of a blessing for all the families of the earth, became a beautiful but empty dream.

2. The doctrines of grace are finely illustrated in this vision. The opposition of Satan is evidently grounded on a charge of sin in Joshua and those for whom he acts. Joshua came before the Angel of Jehovah in his representative capacity, which of course implies the existence of sin to be atoned for and pardoned, for holy beings need no sacrificing priesthood between them and God. This was emphasized at the present time by the recollection of the abominations which had called down the Babylonian captivity, and the still more recent remissness of the restored people in building the Temple. The Jews were weak in faith, despondent in spirit, and more prone to labor for their temporal fortunes than for their spiritual interests. Satan then had a high vantage-ground from which to oppose them. But mark the source of his repulse. "Jehovah, Jehovah *that chooses* Jerusalem, rebuke thee!" The people are reminded here, as they so often were in earlier times, that they had not chosen the Lord, but He had chosen them. It was not their numbers, nor wisdom, nor wealth, nor moral excellence (Deut. vii. 7, 8) which induced Him to make them the depository of his truth and the channel of his grace to a fallen world. It was his own sovereign, condescending grace which had its own reasons, but not reasons subsisting in the moral qualities of Israel. As He had chosen them once, the election still continued, and was a valid reason why they should not be cast off. Nay, the very circumstances which Satan might plead against them were in another point of view arguments in their favor. They had been in the glowing furnace of Chaldæan bondage and exile, and the smell of fire was still on their garments. Everything in their condition spoke of apostasy and its merited recompense. They were a very small remnant left of that proud kingdom which once stretched from the Leontes to Egypt, and from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean. It was difficult to see any trace of the former grandeur in the poverty-stricken colony which gathered around their fathers' graves. But their very fewness and poverty and weakness pleaded for them. They had

been rescued from the common doom of transplanted people by a peculiar providence. A forced migration of an entire population to a distant land usually breaks the old association entirely and forever. New ties and interests are formed, and the present drives the past out of view and out of memory. But here God, by the hand of a man whom He had called and named centuries before he was born (Is. xliv. 28, xlv. 1), had broken the fetters and recalled his banished ones. The work of reëstablishment had begun, and should it cease? Nay, verily. The brand so carefully rescued from a general conflagration, would be preserved, notwithstanding all the clamor of Satan. He who had begun the good work would carry it on to completion. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

3. The doctrine of gratuitous forgiveness is the glory of the Gospel. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Even so was the Church taught in the older dispensation, not only by word as when Abraham's faith was counted for righteousness and by type, as in all the sacrifices, but also by symbol as in the case of Joshua, the high priest. There was no denial of the truth of the facts upon which Satan based his accusation. On the contrary, open confession was made in the very appearance of the priest. Instead of being arrayed in the pure and shining robes expressly appointed for sacerdotal functions, he was clad in filthy garments, — fit emblem of the hideous moral stains by which he and his people were soiled. Each one of those polluted garments echoed the words of the royal penitent, "I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me" (Ps. li. 3). Physical stains may be extracted, but no human agency in all the world can take the soil of sin from the conscience. That is done only by the act of the Lord of the conscience. Its accomplishment here was represented by the order to remove the filthy garments and replace them by festal raiment. It was a sovereign act of the God of grace, — I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee. This lies at the root of all true religion. "There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared." Despair is death. He who has no hope or prospect of the divine mercy, has nothing left but to go on in sin and at last lie down in interminable sorrow. To encourage Israel, fast verging to such a forlorn condition, this vision was vouchsafed. Its aim was not to send the people to sleep in their sins with the false peace of self-righteousness, but to assure them that, notwithstanding the magnitude of those sins, God would of his own free grace remit the penalty and bestow the gift of justification upon the high priest, and in him upon the nation at large. Such an assurance gives peace. Who is he that condemneth? It is God that justifieth.

4. Great as were the present privileges of the covenant people, something better was in store. Their whole economy was introductory and preparative. The golden age of the Hebrews, unlike that of all other ancient nations, was not in the past but the future. Poets and Prophets rejoiced to sing of one who was to come, in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed. Priests and kings were embodied types of the character and functions of this great deliverer. Reminding Joshua and his colleagues of this truth, Jehovah renews the promise of one who should be by eminence his servant. In naming him, the precise term used by the older Prophets is employed again, the Branch, which does not mean "a limb in the sense of one among many on the same tree, but a shoot which springs up from the root, and which, though small at first, becomes a tree of wonderful qualities" (Cowles). The monarchy which in the persons of David and his son Solomon stood like a majestic and wide-spreading tree, now lay in ruins, — the huge trunk cut down, mangled, burned. But from the stump there should come a slender shoot, which in course of time would grow up into a mighty monarch of the forest, putting out limbs and foliage under which whole nations should collect themselves. The term therefore kept steadily in view the salient points the people were to seize. The lowly, unpretending, unpromising origin of this deliverer and the ultimately vast sweep of his beneficent agency. In all outward aspects he stood at the farthest possible remove from his distinguished types, whether of the priestly or kingly line. He never bore the brilliant breast-plate of Aaron into the holy of holies, nor did his hand hold a sceptre except the mocking reed of Pilate's soldiers; yet his sacerdotal function was the only real and efficacious one the earth ever saw, and his royal office has secured a depth of attachment and a fullness of service to which all the records of earth-born loyalty together furnish no parallel.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Wordsworth: Ver. 1. Satan stood at Joshua's right hand and endeavored to work his ruin. So Satan stood at the right hand of our Joshua on the pinnacle of the Temple and tempted him to cast himself down. He stood at Christ's right hand when He was betrayed by Judas into whom Satan entered; he tempted him in his agony and passion; and he is still standing at Christ's right hand by his opposition to the preaching of the Gospel and by his sowing tares of heresy in his Church. — Ver. 2. Here is a solemn warning against the sarcastic, bitter, and virulent spirit which so often shows itself in speaking and writing against others. The holy angels, even in contending against Satan, use mild words. But these rash and reckless persons imitate Satan who is called in Scripture Diabolus or Calumniator. How can they hope to be with good angels hereafter? Must they not rather look to be with those wretched fiends whom they imitate?

Calvin: *Jehovah who chooses Jerusalem.* We are reminded that we are not to consider our deserts in order to gain help from God, for this wholly depends upon gratuitous adoption. Hence, though we are unworthy that God should fight for us, yet his election is sufficient, as he proclaims war against Satan in our behalf. It hence follows that those men who obscure and seek as far as they can to extinguish the doctrine of election, are enemies to the human race; for they strive their utmost to subvert every assurance of salvation.

Owen: Vers. 3–5. Two things are here said to belong to our free acceptance with God. (1.) The taking away of the guilt of our sin, our filthy robes; this is done by the death of Christ, the proper fruit of which is remission of sin. (2.) But more is required, even a collation of righteousness, and thereby a right to life eternal. This is here called change of raiment, or, as it is called by the Holy Ghost in Isaiah (lxi. 10), the garments of salvation, the robe of righteousness. Now this is made ours only by the obedience of Christ, as the other is by his death.

MOORE: Ver. 7. A gratuitous justification furnishes no excuse for inaction and sin, but leads to more entire obedience. . . . Fidelity in God's service shall be gloriously rewarded.

GILL: *Men of wonder.* The people of God are wondered at by themselves, that God should have any love for them, call them by his grace and at last bring them to glory; wondered at by men of the world that they should make such a choice as they do, should bear afflictions with so much patience, and even thrive and flourish amidst them; wondered at by the angels as they are the chosen of God, the redeemed of the Lamb, and called from among men; and they shall be spectators of wonderful things themselves, which they will be swallowed up in the admiration of to all eternity.

COWLES: *I will execute,* etc. The engraving of the Church into forms of spiritual beauty, is eminently God's work by the chisel of his providence and the agency of his Spirit.

JAY: Ver. 10. The reign of the Messiah is distinguished by three things: (1,) Enjoyment. The very image of the vine and the fig tree is delightful. (2.) Liberty. Slaves and captives did not sit under their vines and fig trees, nor did proprietors in time of war. (3.) Benevolence. "Ye shall call every man," etc. There is no selfishness, no envy. All are anxious that others should partake of their privileges.

VISION V. THE CANDLESTICK WITH THE TWO OLIVE TREES.

CHAPTER IV.

A. *A Golden Candelabrum and its Two Oil Feeders* (vers. 1–5). B. *Divine Grace the Source of Strength and Success* (vers. 6–10). C. *The Means by which that Grace is obtained* (vers. 11–14).

1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man who is
2 waked out of his sleep; And said to me, What seest thou? And I said,[1] I have
looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, and its oil-vessel [2] upon the top of it and
its seven lamps upon it, seven pipes each [3] for the lamps which are upon the top of
3 it; and two olive trees by it, one on the right of the oil-vessel and the other on the
4 left of it; And I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying,
5 What are these, my lord? And the angel that talked with me answered and said
6 to me, Knowest thou not what these are? And I said, No, my lord. And he
answered and spake to me, saying: This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel,
saying, Not by might and not by power,[4] but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of Hosts.
7 Who art thou, O great mountain, before Zerubbabel?[5] Be a plain![6] And he shall
8 bring forth the top stone [7] with shoutings, Grace, grace unto it! And the word of
9 Jehovah came to me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of
this house, and his hands shall finish it, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of Hosts
10 hath sent me to you. For who despiseth [8] the day of small things? And they
rejoice and see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, [even] those seven;[9] the
11 eyes of Jehovah, they go to and fro through the whole earth. And I answered
and said unto him, What are these two olive trees on the right of the candlestick
12 and on the left? And I answered the second time and said to him, What are the
two branches [10] of the olive trees, which by means of the two golden spouts [11] empty
13 the gold [12] out of themselves? And he spake to me, saying, Knowest thou not
14 what these are? And I said, No, my lord. And he said, These are the two sons
of oil which stand before [13] the Lord of the whole earth.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 2.—The Kethibh וָאֹמַר must be considered a copyist's error; the Keri, besides agreeing better with the connection and with usage, is found in numerous MSS., and also in the LXX., Itala, Vulg., Targum, and Peshito.

2 Ver 2.—גֻּלָּהּ, which is pointed correctly, may stand for גֻּלָּתָהּ, as תְּבוּנָם, Hos. xii. 2, which escapes the necessity of assuming a masculine גֹּל, of which there is no other example.

3 Ver. 2.—שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה, *seven and seven*, must be taken distributively, for which there is an exact parallel in 2 Sam. xxi. 20. Cf. 1 Chron. xx. 6.

4 Ver. 6. — It seems impossible to establish any distinction between חַיִל and כֹּחַ. Both are used indiscriminately of physical or mental or moral power.

5 Ver. 7. — The Masoretic interpunction requires "before Zerubbabel" to be connected with what goes before, and not, as E. V., with what follows.

6 Ver. 7. — Be a plain! is quite as correct a rendering of לְמִישֹׁר as to supply a future (E. V.), and surely far more spirited.

7 Ver. 7. — The Raphe over the last letter of הָרֹאשָׁה shows that this word is a feminine form of רֹאשׁ, and in apposition with הָאֶבֶן.

8 Ver. 10. — בַּז is one of the two instances in which verbs of this class take Pattach instead of Kamets. The other verb is מַט.

9 Ver. 10. — "Those seven." The translation makes this phrase the subject of the verb rejoice. Professor Cowles objects to the "violent inversion," but this is not worse than to disregard the accents and both the tense and number of the verb, by rendering "who *hath* despised, etc., *Let them* rejoice."

10 Ver. 12. — שִׁבֲּלֵי, ἅπ. λεγ., lit., ears, here twigs or branches, so called because of their resemblance to ripe ears of grain, or (Fürst) of their undulating motion.

11 Ver. 12. — צַנְתְּרוֹת. This also is an ἅπ. λεγ. It does not mean *presses* (Hengstenberg), which is sustained neither by etymology nor taste; nor *receptacles* (Pressel), which is too vague; but, as E. V., *pipes*, *i. e.*, tubes or spouts through which the oil was discharged.

12 Ver. 12. — There is a play upon words here. The shining oil is like liquid gold; hence it is said the *golden* spouts pour *gold* out of themselves.

13 Ver. 14 — עַל (as Henderson suggests) is elliptical for עַל־פְּנֵי = before; or it may be (as 1 Kings xxii. 19, Is. vi. 2) lit., *above* him, which would naturally be the appearance if the Lord was sitting and they were standing.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

In the former vision there was a lively display of the means and ground of the forgiveness of sin. This one advances farther, and shows a positive communication of grace by which all obstacles are overcome and the establishment of God's kingdom effectually secured.

a. The Vision (vers. 1–5). Ver. 1. **And the angel . . . . out of his sleep.** These words imply a pause between this vision and the preceding one, during which the interpreting angel had withdrawn, and the prophet had relapsed into the condition of ordinary consciousness. This condition, compared with the ecstatic state in which supersensual objects are seen, was like sleep compared with waking. Hence Zechariah needed to be aroused from his ordinary and normal state. This was done by the return of the interpreting angel. The new vision presented to him is striking. A candlestick of gold with an oil-vessel on top, from which the oil flows into each one of the seven lamps through seven tubes; and two olive trees by the side of the candlestick.

Ver. 2. **And I said . . . the top of it.** Upon the var. read. see Gram. and Text. The **candlestick** was formed after the pattern of the one in the tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 31–37), but with some remarkable variations. The candelabrum the prophet saw had a round vessel on its top, and seven feeding-tubes for each lamp, and two trees at its sides, none of which were seen in the original pattern in the sanctuary. The precise meaning of the phrase rendered, **seven pipes each**, lit., "seven and seven," has been much contested. Hitzig and Henderson propose an alteration of the text, omitting one of the *sevens*, in accordance with the LXX. and Vulgate. Pressel gains the same end by connecting the first *seven* with what precedes, — which is harsh, and forbidden by the interpunction. Köhler adds the two together, thus making the number of pipes fourteen, but if the prophet had meant that, he would have said so. It is better to take the text as it stands. Forty-nine tubes are very many to proceed from one oil-bowl, but as we know not the size of either the vessel or the pipes, no judgment can be expressed against the possibility of such a thing. That it was probable, seems to be clearly shown by the fact that the visionary candlestick is a designed enlargement of the real one made by Moses.

Ver. 3. **Two olive trees.** The meaning of these trees is further explained in vers. 12–14. The candlestick represents the Church as the appointed light-bearer in a dark world. This is confirmed by such passages in the New Testament as Matt. v. 14, 16, Luke xii. 35, Philip. ii. 15, and by the express statement in Rev. i. 20, "the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." The seven lamps indicated the fullness of the light that was shed, and the seven times seven tubes the number and variety of the channels by which grace was imparted to the luminary.

Vers. 4, 5. **And I answered . . . no, my Lord.** "I answered," *i. e.*, to the statement suggested in the visionary scene. The counter-question of the angel implies that the prophet might have learned the object of the vision from the analogy of the golden candlestick in the holy place. Then the angel gives him the answer.

b. Divine Grace the Source of all Strength (vv. 6–10). Ver. 6. **This is the word, etc.** The vision was an embodied prophecy intended in the first instance for the guidance and comfort of Zerubbabel; and its sum was given in the abrupt utterance: "Not by might," etc. That is, the work which the Hebrew governor has undertaken will be carried out not by human strength in any form, but by the Spirit of God. The candlestick gave light, but it could not do this unless furnished with a plentiful supply of oil. So all that was needful for the maintenance of the Church of God on earth, including the restoration of its material centre at the time, the Temple, could be attained only by the same blessed agency. That the oil of the lamps should symbolize the Holy Spirit, is the less strange, as the anointing oil of consecration was understood always to mean this. The attempt of Kliefoth to establish a distinction between the two words שֶׁמֶן and יִצְהָר, as if the former al-

ways meant anointing oil, and the latter, illuminating oil, is altogether vain. Both are used promiscuously for either purpose, and both may have the same symbolic signification.

Ver. 7. **Who art thou**, etc. As the resources of the Jewish leader were few, and the obstacles in the way numerous and formidable, the thought contained in ver. 6 is expanded in a striking form. The exclamation, *Who art*, etc., gives great vividness to the sentiment, and this is still further increased by the concise force of the appended command, *Into a plain!* Some understand by the mountain the Persian Empire, which is to be leveled to a plain (Chald., Jerome, Kimchi, Hitzig, Hengstenberg, Keil, etc.). But it is better to take it as a figure of the colossal difficulties which rose mountain high at the continuation and completion of the building of the temple. So Kliefoth, Neumann, and most interpreters. This view includes the other, and at the same time allows of an application of the assurance to the Church in all ages. That a mountain in prophecy usually symbolizes a kingdom, as Hengstenberg insists, surely does not compel us always to understand it in that sense. As one well says, the imagery of the Bible is not stereotype. **And he shall bring**, etc. The second half of the verse foretells the joyful completion of the Temple. The stone mentioned is not, as Hengstenberg and Henderson say (with whom agrees Dr. J. A. Alexander, in his comment upon Ps. cxviii. 22), the foundation-stone, for which a different phrase is used (Job xxxviii. 6, Jer. li. 26), but the finishing or gable stone. Nor can the verb be rendered as a simple preterite (Hengstenberg), but in accordance with *Vav cons.*, must be given as in E. V., "And he shall bring," etc. The nominative to the verb is not Jehovàh (Henderson), but Zerubbabel, as the next verse plainly shows. The Jewish leader shall at last bring forth the copestone amidst loud acclamations of the people, crying, **Grace, grace unto it!** *i. e.*, May God grant his grace to the stone and the building it represents, so that it may stand forever.

Ver. 8. An additional communication is now made to the Prophet. Its source is not mentioned, but the analogy of ver. 9 *b* with ii. 9-11 indicates the angel of Jehovah as the author.

Ver. 9. **The hands of . . . . sent me.** As Zerubbabel had laid the foundation of the house of God (Ezra iii. 8-10; Hag. ii. 18), so should he finish it. A confirmation of this promise is given in the next verse.

Ver. 10. **For who despiseth . . . . whole earth.** The construction here is much disputed. Many (LXX., Targum, Peshito, Vulgate, Calvin, Ewald, etc.) make the second clause the apodosis of the first, thus, "for whoever despises the day of small things, they shall see with joy," etc. But מִי, cannot be rendered *whoever*, when followed by a preterite with *Vav cons.* Keil and Wordsworth retain the interrogation, but consider it = a denial; in the sense that no one who hopes to achieve, or does achieve, anything great, despises the day of small things. But this gets a meaning out of the text by first putting it in. It is better to take the clause as a general challenge, "Who despises," etc., *i. e.*, with reason. Then follows the ground of the question in the rest of the verse, the staccato style of which is well explained by Pressel as a climax, of which the steps are three, namely, (1.) Those *seven*, already mentioned in the previous vision. (2.) They are the *eyes of Jehovah*. (3.) They *sweep through all the earth*. These seven eyes, the seven-fold radiations of the Spirit of Jehovah (comp. on iii. 9), gladly see the plummet, etc. However discouraging the small beginnings may be in themselves, the willing coöperation of the divine Spirit ensures success to the enterprise of Zerubbabel. The plummet in the hand indicates the work he is engaged in.

c. The means by which this aid is secured (vers. 11-14).

Ver. 11. **And I answered . . . . left.** The main portion of the symbol has now been explained, but there remains one feature untouched, — the olive trees on either side of the candlestick. Accordingly the Prophet asks the interpreting angel. But without waiting for an answer, he renews the question with a slight modification. The repetition seems to indicate a conviction in his mind of the great significance of this new and peculiar feature of the candelabrum.

Ver. 12. **I answered the second time**, etc. Here it is the branches of the oil trees he inquires about. These are emphasized, apparently, because they are the link of connection between the candelabrum and the trees, and because the peculiarity of this part of the symbol lay in the fact, that the supply of oil came without any intervening agency directly from the source in nature. These branches through spouts discharge at once their oil, which is called *gold*, because of its color or preciousness. A similar use of this word is found in Job xxxvii. 22, where it is said, "Gold cometh out of the north," gold being put for the golden brightness of the sky (E. V., fair weather). The later critics incline to take the word literally.

Ver. 13. To awaken his attention still more to the importance of this portion of the symbol, the angel asks the Prophet if he understood its meaning, and being answered in the negative, proceeds to give the necessary information.

Ver. 14. **These are the two sons of oil**, etc. "Sons of oil" = supplied with oil, *i. e.*, anointed ones. "Stand before" = are servants of. These sons of oil are not the believing members of Israel and the Gentiles (Kliefoth), for this would confound the olive trees with the candlestick; nor Haggai and Zechariah (Hoffman, Baumg., etc.), nor Joshua and Zerubbabel considered as individuals (Henderson, Pressel), for the supply of oil to the candlestick, *i. e.*, the communication of grace to the Church, could not be made to depend upon the lives of two mortal men. The phrase rather denotes the regal and priestly offices which were the chief media in the Old Testament for conveying God's gracious gifts to the Church, and which at the time of the vision were represented by Joshua and Zerubbabel. The appropriateness of the designation lies in the fact that unction was the ceremony by which persons were inducted into these offices.

The peculiar encouragement of this vision appears in the circumstance that the Church was still represented by a stately candelabrum, made as formerly of solid gold, but furnished with far more numerous pipes of communication, and supplied with oil, not by the daily service of the priests, but from living olive trees at its side which continually poured in a fresh and abundant stream of the golden liquid.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The Church is a golden light-bearer, and therefore at once precious and luminous. Pre-

cious in the sight of God as chosen and called and honored by Him. Zion is his peculiar inheritance, its members are his jewels, acquired by an immeasurable ransom. Notwithstanding, therefore, their fewness or obscurity or imperfections, they are properly symbolized by an article made of solid gold. But this article is as significant in its use as it is in its material. It is a candlestick or lamp-stand. Its object is to give light. Hence our Lord said to his followers, Ye are the light of the world. This has been one of the chief functions of the Church in all ages. For the greater part of the race has always been in the condition described by Isaiah (lx. 2), "Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the peoples." This was the natural and necessary result of depravity, "their foolish heart was darkened." They often made great advances in civilization, but there was no corresponding growth in religious opinion or practice; on the contrary, "professing themselves to be wise they became fools." All the true and pure light the ancient world enjoyed streamed out from the candlestick which God set up in his chosen people. With all their imperfections the Jews preserved the knowledge of the true God and of the mode of acceptable worship; and their sacred books were a torch from which many a minor light among surrounding nations was kindled. Still more largely was this the case when the new economy was established. It was intended to be diffusive and propagandist, but only by the force of light, — the manifestation of the truth. It courted the day. It disowned the unfruitful works of darkness. It demanded intelligent faith and adherence. Never was there a more unscriptural maxim than that which claims ignorance as the mother of devotion. The Church is now, as she always was, a light-bearer, and seeks to accomplish her objects by mental and moral illumination. Nor is there the least ground for the not infrequent charge of unfriendliness to the progress of discovery in physical science. Zion holds firmly that the author of nature and of revelation is one and the same, and that it is quite impossible that there can be any real discordance between the two forms of God's self-disclosure. She objects to hasty inferences and unsound deductions, but knowledge, true knowledge of all kinds, she welcomes as akin to her own nature, and subservient to those great ends for which the Most High has set up his golden candlestick in this dark world.

2. But the Church like the moon shines only with a borrowed light. She has no resources of her own. All depends upon the central Sun of Righteousness, not only for illumination, but for every other kind or degree of influence. This is a fundamental truth of Scripture and experience. In religious development, outward or inward, the efficient cause always lies back of what is seen. God uses human instruments, and rarely, if ever, operates independently of them, but when they effect their aim, the power comes from above. A sailing vessel perfectly appointed and manned, cannot move in a calm. The most ingenious machine accomplishes nothing, if motive power be withheld. In like manner the Church is helpless if forsaken of the Spirit of God. A new birth, a new creation, a resurrection from death in trespasses and sins, — these are objects which mock all the array of mere human agencies. Only He who made the soul and breathed into it of his own inspiration can recast the broken mould and bring back the fair image so sadly marred by sin. Hence the unspeakable importance in all Christian work of giving due honor to the Spirit. Neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. The Apostles were held fast in Jerusalem until the Spirit was poured out from on high. Then and not before, the Word had free course and was glorified. And so it has been ever since. Whether in individual conversions or in mighty movements among races and nations, the effect is due to a divine and supernatural cause. In the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, so long as this truth was recognized, the work went on; but when an arm of flesh was introduced and reliance placed upon government or policy, a retrograde movement began. God is jealous for his honor; his glory He will not give to another. If his people will not receive the doctrine that all real advances are made by his Holy Spirit, then He teaches them by sore experience that nothing can be done by might or by power, by the very best human appliances. Leviathan is not so tamed. "He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood, and laugheth at the shaking of a spear." Only "He that made him can make his sword to approach unto him."

3. The contempt of small beginnings especially in religious matters has been quite a common feeling. Yet such a feeling is rebuked by the whole experience of the Church of God. The prospect of a godly seed on the earth once lay wrapped up in a childless man, "and him as good as dead;" and yet there sprang from Abraham as many as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable. The stripling David was reproved by his brothers and derided by Goliath, yet a stone from his sling laid the giant low. The Psalmist sings of a handful of corn on a bleak mountain top, which yet yields a harvest that rustles like the lordly woods of Lebanon; and the Prophet tells of a worm Jacob which threshes the mountains. Samaritan scoffers laughed at the first feeble walls of restored Jerusalem, yet there came a time when to suppress the sedition of that city strained the last resources of imperial Rome. Twelve men went forth to give the Gospel to the world, and before the end of the first century, believers were found all the way from the shores of Britain to far Cathay. In the sixteenth century one man entered the lists against the anti-christian corruptions of the time, and Leo X. spoke contemptuously of "Brother Martin," but in the issue one half of Europe was emancipated from the papal yoke, and the Man of Sin received a fatal blow. The finest wit of Great Britain set the polite world on a broad laugh at the "consecrated cobblers" who commenced the work of East Indian missions; yet today the whole Church of Christ honors that heroic vanguard of Hindoo missionaries, and the friends of the wit would gladly sponge out his misplaced jests. The law of Providence is to begin with a day of small things. A little leaven hid in the measures of meal at last affects the entire mass. The smallest of seeds when planted grows into a tree upon whose branches the fowls of the air may lodge. No mature grain ever springs instantaneously from the earth. It is "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." The oak which has withstood the storms of a thousand years was once an acorn. The mighty river which fertilizes a continent began with a tiny streamlet which even an infant's hand could divert. It becomes no one, least of all a believer, to deride a feeble beginning. No matter how small it may

be, yet if carried forward in faith and prayer, neither man nor angel can tell whereunto it may grow.

4. The effusion of the Holy Ghost is not an arbitrary thing. Whitsunday stands in direct relation with Good Friday and Easter. The lamps of the candlestick give light because the manifold tubes convey oil in a constant flow from the central reservoir. But how is this reservoir kept full? By living trees whose supply is perpetually renewed. These living trees are the priesthood and kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ. By his sacrifice the blessed Lord procured the measureless grace of the Holy Ghost, and by his enthronement at the Father's right hand He has power to shed down the life-giving influence in streams as mighty as those which made Pentecost forever memorable. These trees are living, ever-living. The blood of the one great ransom is ever new (*καινός, recens*); it does not clot so as to be inefficacious; it belongs to an unchangeable priesthood; it endures to the uttermost in point of time. So the session on high is uninterrupted. Our Lord sat down forever on the right hand of God (Heb. x. 12), and therefore always holds his ascension gifts to be dispensed at will for the preservation, the extension, and the exaltation of his Church. The oil of grace cannot fail, just because the Lord Jesus is an eternal priest and an eternal king. Here is a valid ground for faith, hope, and prayer. There is no machinery by which the most fervid evangelist can yoke the blessed Spirit to his methods and measures. But the varied and repeated and emphatic promises of the One Mediator (John xiv. 16, 17, 26, xv. 26, xvi. 7–11, 13–15) encourage every toiler in the vineyard, however feeble or obscure, to look up to the *priest upon his throne*, with an absolute conviction that his arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear. If the Saviour in the days of his flesh, had the Spirit without measure, how much more must He now, in his glorious exaltation far above all heavens! The wonders of Pentecost were explained by the Apostle Peter (Acts ii. 33) as an immediate gift of the ascended Saviour, who "having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." The supply of spiritual gifts depends upon the perpetual intercession within the veil; and in vain do we look for oil in the lamps if by conceit or neglect we neglect the olive-branches from which alone the supply is maintained.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

CALVIN: The material of the candlestick was intended to set forth a mystery. It is indeed true that gold is corruptible; but as we cannot otherwise understand what exceeds the things of the world, the Lord, under the figure of gold and silver and precious stones, sets forth those things which are celestial, and which surpass in value the earth and the world. It was for this purpose that God commanded the candlestick to be made of gold, not that He needed earthly wealth or riches, or was pleased with them as men are.

WORDSWORTH: Observe the candlestick is golden and the oil is called gold; it is like liquid gold. The Church must be pure and holy; and what she teaches and ministers to the people must be pure and holy also; not adulterated with the admixture of any novel doctrines, such as those which have been added by some to the faith once delivered to the saints, and imposed as necessary to salvation.

C. BRADLEY: Observe, these Scriptures do not say that there are no enemies, no mountains, no difficulties. They do not make the salvation of the Church that light thing which some of us make it. On the contrary, they suppose it to be in itself a work of the utmost difficulty. But then, Christ, they tell us, is more than equal to it; He is mighty to save; He can prepare his people for heaven and carry them there, in spite of everything.

JOHN FOSTER: When good men despise the day of small things, it is because the grand essential of religion, *Faith*, is wanting. They lack faith in the unerring wisdom of the Divine scheme and determinations; faith in the goodness of God, the absolute certainty that infinite wisdom and power cannot be otherwise than good; faith in the promise of God, that his servants shall in the succession of their generations see his cause advance from the small to the great, though this be not granted to any one separately.

PAYSON: We ought not to despise the day of small things, because, (1) such conduct tends to prevent its becoming a day of great things. (2) Angels do not despise, etc., but rejoice over even one repenting sinner. (3) Our Saviour does not break the bruised reed, nor quench, etc. (4) God does not despise, etc., but noticed even some good thing found in the son of Jeroboam. (5) The day of small things is the commencement of great things.

GILL: The lamp of a profession without the oil of grace is a dark and useless thing.

VISION VI. THE FLYING ROLL.

CHAPTER V. 1–4.

A. *A large Roll flying over the Land* (vers. 1, 2). B. *It contains and executes a destructive Curse* (vers. 3, 4).

1, 2 And I lifted up my eyes again,[1] and saw, and behold a flying roll. And he said
to me, What seest thou? And I said, I see a flying roll; its length twenty cubits
3 and its breadth ten cubits. And he said to me, This is the curse that goeth forth
over the face of the whole land; for every one that stealeth shall be cut off[2] on this

side according to it, and every one that sweareth shall be cut off on that side, accord-
4 ing to it. I have brought[3] it forth, saith Jehovah of Hosts, and it shall enter into
the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth by my name to a
falsehood, and it shall lodge[4] in the midst of his house and consume it, both its wood
and its stones.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — *Again*. For this meaning of שׁוֹב, cf. 2 Kings i. 11.

2 Ver. 3. — נִקָּה = emptied, exhausted, here manifestly = destroyed.

3 Ver. 4. — הוֹצֵאתִיהָ cannot be rendered, "I *will* bring it forth.

4 Ver. 4. — לָנָה irregular for לָנָה. It means, to pass the night, h. *abide*.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The series of visions here takes a sharp turn. All that preceded were of a consolatory character, setting forth the overthrow of Zion's foes, the forgiveness of the people, their illumination and exaltation by the Spirit of God, and consequently the sure and speedy completion of the Temple. Now, however, the prophet is directed to show his countrymen that Jehovah is a holy God, and wickedness cannot dwell with Him. There is no toleration for sinners while they continue such. As many as still remain impenitent, or reject God's provision of mercy, shall be visited with an exterminating judgment, or experience a captive exile far longer and more dreary even than that which their fathers had suffered in Babylon. This is set forth vividly and plainly in the two visions which follow, which, although entirely distinct in form and manifestation, yet are closely allied in subject and bearing.

The former of the two borrows the groundwork of its striking symbolism from the Mosaic Law ("curse," "roll"), and sets forth with fearful energy the retributive consequences of sin.

(*a.*) *The Flying Roll* (vers. 1, 2). Ver. 1. **I lifted up . . . again.** This implies an interval, longer or shorter, since the last vision. What he saw is described fully in the next verse.

Ver. 2. **And he said.** That is, the interpreting angel said, as is obvious from what precedes. "Roll" = book-scroll or parchment; of course one so large as this must have been composed of many skins fastened together. It is seen flying over the earth unrolled, so that its size could be discerned. Its dimensions are ten yards long by five broad. Some (Köhler, Henderson, *et al.*) consider these measurements as intended only to state that it was of considerable size. But as that could be so easily expressed in a simpler way, it is better to regard the dimensions as significant. But of what? Hengstenberg, Hoffman, Umbreit, following Kimchi, assume a reference to the porch of the Temple which was of the same size (1 Kings vi. 3), and infer that the intention was to represent the judgment as "a consequence of the theocracy," to which, however, it is justly objected that the temple-porch in itself had no symbolic significance, nor was it a meeting-place for Israel. Keil and Kliefoth say that the dimensions were taken from those of the holy place of the tabernacle (twenty cubits by ten), and explain, "the measure by which this curse upon sinners will be meted out will be the measure of the holy place." *i. e.*, it will act so as to cut them off from the congregation of the Lord which appeared before God in the holy place. I should prefer to take the dimensions as a suggestion of the *scope* of the impending judgment, namely, the covenant people.

(*b.*) *Meaning of the Roll* (vers. 3, 4). Ver. 3. **This is the curse.** Henderson compares our Lord's words, "This is (represents) my body." "**The whole land**," *i. e.*, of Israel, as the analogy of the preceding and following visions shows. The curse hovers over the entire region, ready to fall upon its destined objects. These are **the thief** and the **false swearer**, who are taken as examples, one from each table of the law; and therefore stand for all sinners. Such are to be **cut off** = driven out of the fellowship of God's people, with the usual implication, in that phrase, of destruction. **On this side, on that side**, refer to the two sides of the roll (Ex. xxxii. 15), on one of which was the curse against one class of sinners, and on the other that against the other class. Then **according to it** (*i. e.*, according to its terms) refers respectively to these two sides.

Ver. 4. **I have brought.** To render this in the future, as E. V., is a needless departure from the original. God *has* caused it to come forth, as the prophet sees. He proceeds now to tell him what it will do. It will enter the house of the sinner, and come to stay. **Lodge**, literally, pass the night, and hence dwell permanently. Nor will it remain idle, but destroy until not only the contents but even the most durable parts of the house were consumed. Cf. 1 Kings xviii. 38.

VISION VII. THE WOMAN IN THE EPHAH.

Chapter V. 5–11.

A. *The Prophet sees an Ephah going forth* (vers. 5, 6). B. *A Woman thrust down in it and shut in* (vers. 7, 8). C. *The Ephah carried away to Shinar* (vers. 9–11).

5 And the angel that talked with me came forth, and said to me, Lift up thine
6 eyes, I pray, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And
he said, This is the ephah that goeth forth. And he said, This is their aim[1] in
7 all the land. And behold, a round piece[2] of lead was lifted up, and this is a[3]
8 woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is wickedness; and
he cast her into the midst of the ephah, and cast the weight[4] of lead into its mouth.
9 And I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold, two women came forth and the wind
was in their wings, and they had wings like a stork's wings; and they lifted[5] up
10 the ephah between earth and heaven. And I said to the angel that talked with
11 me, Whither are these taking the ephah? And he said to me, To build for her[6] a
house in the land of Shinar; and it shall be established[7] and settled there upon its
own base.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 6. — עֵינָם, lit., eye, here that to which the eye is directed = aim. The Genevan version gives *sight*. See Exeg. and Crit.

2 Ver. 7. — כִּכַּר. Margin of E. V. gives *weighty piece*, but the word denotes shape rather than size or weight. It is another word that is rendered *weight* in the next verse.

3 Ver. 7. — אַחַת. This seems to be one of the cases in which the first numeral is employed as an indefinite article, as Ex. xxix. 8.

4 Ver. 8. — אֶבֶן = stone, here lead-*weight*, just as in iv. 10 it is used with הַבְּדִיל to mean *tin-weight* or plummet.

5 Ver. 9. — In תִּשֶּׂנָה the quiescent א is dropped (Green, *H. G.*, § 164, 2).

6 Ver. 11. — The grammatical subject of the suffix in לָהּ is of course the ephah, but logically it must refer to the woman it contains, as a house is not built for a measure. The marginal Masoretic note calls for a *Raphe* to mark the absence of a dagesh in the ה, but it is not found in the text.

7 Ver. 11. — הוּכַן according to its gender is to be construed with בַּיִת, and הֻנִּיחָה with אֵיפָה or the woman inclosed in it.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

a. The Ephah (vers. 5, 6). Ver. 5. **And . . . goeth forth.** This shows that we have a new vision here, and not a continuation of the preceding one (Umbreit, Neumann, Keil). The two are closely allied, indeed, in tone and character, still they are distinct in form and as such were represented to the Prophet.

Ver. 6. **What is it?** The Prophet sees some vague form rising, as it were, out of mist, but is not able to distinguish what it is. To his question he receives the reply that this is **the ephah**, *i. e.*, the one which is to constitute the main feature of the vision. The ephah was one of the most familiar of dry measures among the Hebrews. Its capacity cannot now be exactly determined; according to Josephus it contained something more than eight gallons and a half; according to the Rabbinists, a little less than four gallons and a half. Nothing in the interpretation depends upon its exact measurement. The latter part of the verse is difficult. עֵינָם is rendered by the LXX., Peshito, and Arabic, as if it were pointed עֲוֹנָם (their sin), and these have been followed by Hitzig, Burger, and Fürst (in Lex.). But for such a reading there is only one MS. authority, and besides, as Pressel says, in that case the ephah would be called unrighteousness in ver. 6, and the woman in it would receive that name in ver. 8. We must, therefore, accept the traditional pointing, and render *their eye*, but in what sense? Many from Luther down say that it means appearance, or as in E. V. "resemblance," *i. e.*, the people are like the sin-containing ephah (Rosenmuller, Maurer, Bunsen, Keil). But this is an unusual sense of the word, and besides gives a frigid sentiment. It is better to take the term as designating the object to which men's eyes were directed (Umbreit, Hengstenberg, Köhler, Pressel). The dwellers in all the land were looking to the ephah as a measure to be filled with sin. Their success and its unhappy results are set forth in what follows.

b. Its Contents (vers. 7, 8). — Ver. 7. **A round piece of lead.** The symbol is still further developed, and the Prophet sees now a circular mass of

metal lifted up over the ephah. כִּכַּר is often rendered *talent* elsewhere in cases where its meaning as such is determined by a following noun, but here it is better to adhere to the literal sense. **This is.** Now for the first time it appears that the ephah has an occupant. Hence the form of the expression "This is," equivalent to, See, there is a woman, etc. אחת is probably used merely for the indefinite article (1 Kings xx. 13); but if it is to be pressed as = *one* woman, it will then indicate that the sinners, although many in number, are considered as one living personality.

Ver. 8. **This is wickedness.** On the meaning attached to this phrase turns the entire bearing of the vision. Many (Calvin, Köhler, Pressel, Baumgarten, Henderson), take it as = wickedness in itself, abstracted from its perpetrators, and this, they say, is confined, sealed up, and transported far off, so as to leave the land where it once dwelt pure; and thus the vision is one of promise. But this view is opposed by the tenor of the preceding vision which all admit to be closely allied to this one, as well as by its own intrinsic improbability, although Hengstenberg speaks far too strongly when he says "It is only concrete sin that admits of being carried away. The transportation of sin apart from sinful individuals, is nonsense." How would that learned man have reconciled with his statement such language as that of the Psalmist (ciii. 12), "Far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us!" But on this hypothesis it is difficult to conceive of any reason why Shinar rather than any other place should be mentioned as the place of deportation (ver. 11). It is better therefore to take the other view (Marck., Hengstenberg, Keil), which regards the woman as a personification of the ungodly Jewish nation. A somewhat similar usage is found in 2 Chron. xxiv. 7, where (in Hebrew) Athaliah is called "the wickedness." Consequently, the subsequent acts of the angel, in casting the woman down into the measure and then closing the same with the heavy solid lid, simply indicate the full provision made for the due punishment of the sinners thus carefully secured.

c. *Its Removal* (vers. 9-11). — Ver. 9. **Two women came forth,** etc. The removal of the ephah with its contents is described. This is done by two women, — *women* because it was a woman they were carrying away, and *two*, because the burden was too heavy for one to bear. They are furnished with **wings,** because the movement is to be through the air. The wings are specified as being those of a **stork,** not because the stork is a bird of passage (Umbreit, Baumgarten, etc.), for the movement here is not periodical; nor because it flies fast (Maurer), for other birds fly faster; nor because it was an unclean bird (Köhler); nor because it was a *pia avis* (Neumann), which does not suit the object; but simply because it had broad pinions, and such were required to sustain so heavy a mass as the ephah with its leaden lid. **The wind was in** these wings to increase their velocity. The women have been supposed to represent Israel and Judah, or Ezra and Nehemiah, or the two last kings of Judah, or the two captivities, or Titus and Hadrian; but there is no need of strictly defining them, since they belong to the mere drapery of the symbol, and stand only as representatives of the powers employed by God to carry away the sinners of his people.

Ver. 11. **To build . . . . Shinar.** In reply to the Prophet's question he is told that the object of the two women is to prepare a permanent habitation for her, *i. e.*, the woman in the ephah. *Shinar* is an old historic name (Gen. x. 10), afterwards applied poetically to Babylon (Is. xi. 11; Dan. i. 2). Its occurrence here led Rosenmüller to suppose that the entire vision referred to the past, and not to the future, which is simply impossible. There is no difficulty in explaining it by a reference to the usage of the Prophets, to represent future events by images drawn from the past, and at the same time transfer to the former the names which belong to the latter. This verse then simply foretells the punishment of wickedness by another exile, — like that to Babylon, and therefore called by its name, but far more prolonged. This latter feature is expressed by the building of the house, but intensified by the final clause — "**established and settled on its own base.**" According to Keil, Shinar is not here a geographical epithet, but taken as an ideal designation of the sphere of ungodliness, and the symbol accordingly expresses the truth that the wicked will be removed out of the congregation of the Lord and permanently settled within the ungodly kingdom of this world. This distinction and separation will run on through the ages, and at last be completed in the general judgment. Henderson maintains that the woman in the ephah represented idolatry which was carried away by the two women, *i. e.*, Assyria and Babylonia, to Chaldæa, where it was to commingle with its native elements and never be reimported into Canaan; in support of which he cites the fact that for two thousand years the Jews have never once lapsed into idolatry. But idolatry did not at this time exist in Judea, and therefore could not be removed out of it; and if it was taken to Babylon, it certainly did not remain there, for the Mohammedan occupants of that region are not idolaters. It agrees better with the original force of the word, with the connection, and with the preceding vision, to take the term as denoting the entire wickedness of the people of all kinds, or rather the people as such embodied wickedness. As thus understood, the vision was fulfilled centuries afterward, when the Jews as a whole, having rejected with scorn their Messiah, were given over to the stroke of vengeance. After a most desperate struggle, they were crushed by the Roman Emperors, and scattered to the four winds of heaven. And so they remain, shut up in the ephah, the tremendous weight of their own obstinacy forbidding the prospect of release. The corresponding passage to this one in the second part is couched in different terms (xi. 15, 16). After the rejection of the good shepherd and the breaking of his staves of office, the wretched flock is given over to a foolish or wicked shepherd who does what he ought not to do, and fails to do what he ought, and so the poor sheep suffer in every way. But wholly different as the imagery is in the two passages, there is a remarkable sameness in the underlying idea.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. In the two preceding chapters the constituent elements of the Gospel were presented; here we are brought face to face with the Law. The white robes of innocence and the golden oil of the Holy Spirit disappear, and in their place comes a fearful curse overshadowing the land and threatening an irrecoverable overthrow. There is no contradiction, no inconsistency in this. The one message was as true and as pertinent as the other.

Zechariah's design was not simply to urge on the rebuilding of the Temple at all costs and hazards, but to educate the national conscience, to keep alive the memory of sin, and lay deep the foundations of faith and repentance. When this was accomplished, all outward works would proceed of themselves. And there was at least a part of the people, who needed to be stimulated by the presentation of the sterner side of the divine character. There was a golden future in store for Israel, but not absolutely, not for all simply by virtue of their national origin. The day of the Lord was darkness as well as light (Amos v. 18), and sinners in Zion would find the messenger of the Lord like refiner's fire and fuller's soap (Mal. iii. 1, 2).

Our Lord indicated this very plainly throughout his personal ministry. The remarkable Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v.–vii.) begins with a soothing strain of beatitudes pronounced upon the lowly, and meek, and sorrowful, etc., but very soon corrects any false impressions as to the object of the Messiah by setting forth the perpetuity of the law and his purpose to confirm and establish rather than abrogate its authority. While, therefore, he sweeps away the wretched evasions and glosses accumulated by men's perverse ingenuity, he reaffirms all its particulars as the unchangeable statute of his kingdom, — both as regards precept and penalty. His ends are gained, and his grace is manifested, not by erasing the sanctions of Law, but by meeting and discharging them. He soothes conscience not by enervating or deluding it, but by satisfying its anxious cravings. The mawkish sentimentalism which denies hell, and refuses to hear of endless retributions, finds no precedent in his words or course.

2. But what was needful for Israel after the exile is equally needful in all ages of the Church. The moral law requires to be continually set forth in its sanction as well as in its precept, and it is an emasculated theology which dispenses with either. The Gospel loses its meaning if there be no such thing as Rectoral Justice. Calvary presupposes Sinai, just as ransom presupposes bondage. What need is there of forgiveness, if there is nothing to forgive? Hence the visions of Satan overthrown and of the luminous golden candelabrum have for their background this wide-spread roll of curses. God will visit for sin, for all sin, whether committed against himself directly or against his creatures. The two tables of the law stand on the same basis, and no man dare pick and choose to which he will render obedience. The anathemas of Scripture are not a mere *brutum fulmen*, but a solid and terrible reality. The lightning of heaven is not more certain and irresistible. Where the curse once enters, it takes up its abode and consumes all. The standing historical illustration of this truth is seen in that gloomy and death-like sea which is all that now remains of a region once bright with verdant plains and full of populous cities.

3. The strokes of punitive wrath do not fall capriciously or at random. There is ample reason in every case, so that one may always say, This [the ephah] is their object in all the land. Men go on ceaselessly adding sin to sin, and because judgment is not suddenly executed, think that there is impunity; whereas they are only filling the measure. God waits. There is an appointed time with Him, and He will not anticipate. He announced a general principle when he told Abraham that his seed could not take possession of the land of promise, "for the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full." The wicked are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. When the end comes, the symbolism of Zechariah is realized. Sinners are shut up with their sins in the measure, the weight of a talent shuts down the lid, and then they are carried where the retribution begins and does not end. Just like that deportation to the figurative Shinar. Its solitary example among the nations testifies of a permanent retribution.

> Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
> How shall ye flee away and be at rest?
> The wild dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
> Mankind their country, — Israel but the grave.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

MOORE: It is needful to tell the love of God, to unfold his precious promises, and to utter words of cheer and encouragement. But it is also needful to declare the other aspect of God's character. There is a constant tendency in the human heart to abuse the goodness of God to an encouragement of sin. Hence ministers of the Gospel must declare this portion of God's counsel as well as the other. . . . . The finally impenitent shall be driven from God into gloomy exile, and left to himself, "to rest on his own base," to be subject to the thrall of his own lawless lusts that he has so long pampered into strength, and to reap as he has sowed through a long and limitless banishment.

WORDSWORTH: None who enter the porch of the visible Church may flatter themselves that they can escape God's wrath and malediction, if they commit any of the sins condemned by the comprehensive commination of this Flying Roll, which may be compared to a net coextensive with the world and drawn throughout the whole from side to side.

VISION VIII. THE FOUR CHARIOTS.

CHAPTER VI. 1–8.

A. *Four Chariots drawn by Horses of different Colors* (vers. 1–4). B. *Explanation of their Meaning* (vers. 5–8).

1 And I lifted up my eyes again,[1] and saw, and behold, four chariots came from be-
2 tween the two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first

3 chariot were red horses, and in the second chariot black horses, And in the third
4 chariot white horses, and in the fourth chariot speckled bay[2] horses. And I an-
5 swered and said to the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And
the angel answered and said to me, These are the four winds[3] of the heavens, coming
6 forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. That in which are the black
horses goes[4] forth into the land of the north, and the white go behind them, and the
7 speckled go forth to the land of the south. And the bay went forth, and desired to
go — to pass to and fro[5] through the earth; and he said, Go, pass to and fro through
8 the earth; and they went through the earth. And he called me and spake to me,
saying, Behold, these that go forth into the land of the north have caused my
Spirit to rest[6] upon the land of the north.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

Ver. 1. — וָאָשֻׁב = again. Cf. ch. v. 1.

2 Ver. 3. — "Speckled bay," that is, speckled upon a bay ground. The word here rendered *speckled* is not the same as the one so rendered in the E. V. of ch. i. 8. Noyes translates in this place, *spotted-red*.

3 Ver. 5. — רוּחוֹת. The margin of E. V., *winds*, is better than the text, *spirits*. Cf. Jer. xlix. 36. I can find no instance in which the plural is used to denote angelic beings. Certainly Ps. civ. 4 is not one.

4 Ver. 6. — The first clause contains a singular anacoluthon, יֹצְאִים, referring by its number to the horses, instead of the implied מֶרְכָּבָה, to which it grammatically belongs.

5 Ver. 7. — "Pass to and fro," *i. e.*, in every direction.

6 Ver. 8. — Noyes renders הֵנִיחוּ רוּחִי, *execute my wrath*, which is an excellent interpretation, but hardly a translation. The E. V. *quieted* cannot be sustained by usage, and is at best ambiguous, although it is copied in Dr. Van Dyck's New Arabic version. The invariable use of the hiphil verb requires the rendering given in the text.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This vision completes the cycle of the series by returning to the point of departure, using imagery much like that of the first vision, and indicating the complete fulfillment of what had there been pledged. Here it is not horses and riders who serve only as exploring scouts, but chariots of war who actually execute what they are commanded. They go forth not from a grove of myrtles in an open bottom, but from between lofty brazen mountains, an adequate symbol of the strength and permanence of the divinely guarded theocracy. They act in all directions, but especially in those regions whence in the past the most formidable enemies of the kingdom of God proceeded. They put in exercise the various destructive agencies indicated by the colors of the horses, — war, pestilence, mourning, famine, — until the Spirit of God is satisfied with the overthrow. But the destruction of the Lord's enemies is the triumph of his friends, and in this view the eighth vision appropriately terminates the first series of revelations granted to Zechariah, with a cheering prospect, of which a fuller development is given in the closing chapters of the book.

a. The Symbol of the Four Chariots (vers. 1–4). Ver. 1. **Four chariots. . . . mountains.** The prophet in the usual way indicates that another vision is disclosed to him. The four chariots which he sees can scarcely be other than war chariots, and are therefore a symbol of authority and judgment. The article prefixed to **two mountains** does not necessarily refer to them as already known (so Hengstenberg, who supposes a reference to Ps. cxxv. 2, which is certainly far-fetched), but simply defines them as forming the back-ground of the scene presented to the prophet. Their ideal character is confirmed by the statement that they are "**of brass**,' a manifest symbol of impregnable strength. There is no need, therefore, of referring to Zion and Moriah (Maurer, Umbreit, etc.), or to Zion and the Mount of Olives (Keil, Moore), although the latter may have suggested the symbol. A valley guarded by two brazen hills is not an unworthy image of the resistless might of Him who from such a place sends forth the executioners of his will. The number of the chariots, according to the analogies of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation, indicates, like the four points of the compass, universality, a judgment that goes in every direction.

Vers. 2, 3. **In the first chariot . . . . bay horses.** The number of the horses is not mentioned, although the rabbins say there were four to each chariot. The colors are specified, and must be significant. The usual interpretation makes *red* denote war and bloodshed, *black*, sorrow and death, *white*, victory. The fourth color, *speckled*, commonly derived from a root = hail, and hence rendered, "having hail-like spots," is explained by Hengstenberg as denoting judgments falling like hail (Rev. viii. 7, xvi. 21), but by Keil as indicating famine and pestilence, which is better than to regard it with Henderson, as indicating a mixed dispensation of joy and sorrow, or with T. V. Moore as combining all the others. A more difficult question arises concerning the next word, אֲמֻצִּים. It is strange to find an epithet of quality in immediate connection with a series referring to color, yet this must be admitted if the word is taken in its usual sense, given in the margin of E. V., Vulgate, and by most expositors, *i. e.*, *strong*. To escape the difficulty, some represent the first consonant, א, as softened from ח, and so get חֲמֻצִּים = bright red (Kimchi, Calvin, Cocceius, Ewald, Köhler). Others suppose an error of the transcriber (Hitzig, Maurer, Pressel). But it is better with Fürst (in *Lex.*), to derive the word in the text from an Arabic root = to shine, whence he obtains the signification, *dazzling red*. Dr. Van

Dyck, in the modern Arabic Bible, renders it by شُعْر, = shining red. In any event, the colors of the horses denote the character of the mission on which they are sent. But an elaborate effort has been made by Hoffman, followed by Kliefoth, Wordsworth, and others, to represent the colors as indicating the four great empires of Daniel as instruments of God's judgments. But this is forbidden by the contemporaneousness of the going forth of the several chariots, by their destination as stated in the text, by the lack of historical verification, and other considerations. See Keil and Köhler *in loc.* for a full refutation of this apparently plausible view.

b. The Explanation (vers. 5–8). Ver. 5. **These are the four winds.** Not four *spirits*, as the text of the E. V. has it, and Henderson and Neumann, for angels are rarely if ever so described in the Old Testament, nor in that case would the appended words, "of the heavens," have any suitable meaning, nor does the Scripture know anything of four angels *par eminence*. These winds, the angel said, came **forth from standing before** the universal Lord, in whose service they were. Ps. cxlviii. 8. "Stormy wind fulfilling his word." The agency of the four winds in the work of destructive judgment is seen in Jer. xlix. 36, Dan. vii. 2, Rev. vii. 1.

Vers. 6, 7. **That in which are,** etc. These verses describe the particular regions visited by these divinely appointed messengers. The black went toward **the land of the north,** which all agree denotes the territory washed by the Tigris and Euphrates. See on ch. ii. 6, 7. The **white go after them,** not *to the West*, as Ewald translates, for then we should expect the East also, which does not occur; and besides, the west to the Hebrews represented only the sea. Better is the ingenious view of Pressel, who, insisting on the force of the preposition, renders "to the land farther behind them." This is grammatically tenable, and favored by the fact that it brings into view the farther East, the Medes and Persians, as one of the distinct objects of the divine visitation. **The land of the south** is of course Egypt and Arabia.

Ver. 7. **And the bay went,** etc. So far, the prophet seems to have omitted the first chariot, the one with red horses, and in order to make up the number four, to have divided the third team into two, taking its second designation of color, *bay*, as the fourth. How are we to understand this? Keil, who, however, renders אֲמֻצִּים, *strong*, regards the problem as insoluble. Hengstenberg affirms that the class mentioned in the seventh verse is in reality the first, and they are called strong, because they really were the strongest of all; but this assumes what is certainly not stated, and cannot be proved. Hitzig and Maurer assume that עֲמֻצִּים was omitted from ver. 6 by mistake, and afterwards erroneously substituted in ver. 7 for אֲדֻמִּים. It is better to interpret the term as Fürst does in ver. 3, although even then it remains inexplicable why the prophet should have described the first class not by its own name but by one already appropriated as part of that of the third. It may, however, be safely inferred that while the various colors of the horses had some significance, yet that this was not a matter of very great importance, else the distinctions stated would have been more accurately observed. Certainly the general sense of the vision is plain, whatever view one adopts as to the variations in the description. One point all agree in, namely, that the seventh verse sets forth what was done by the horses of the first chariot. These appear to have been not content like the others with one particular territory, but asked permission to **go through the whole earth. And he said,** *i. e.*, the Lord of the whole earth, who (ver 5) causes the chariots to go forth.

Ver. 8. **And he called me.** The interpreting angel calls aloud to the prophet, arousing his attention to the purport of the vision. **Have caused my Spirit to rest upon.** This has often been explained as analogous to the phrase "to cause fury to rest," in Ezek. v. 13, xvi. 42, but *wrath* is not the same as *spirit*. Nor is such a violent assumption at all necessary. The Lord's Spirit is sometimes a Spirit of judgment and of burning (Is. iv. 4), and it is in this sense that the chariots let down his manifestations on the nations. This verse specifies only **the land of the north** as the scene of these operations. But it could easily be inferred from this what was the result in the other directions. The north country was mentioned because, as the inveterate foe of the covenant people, it was the principal mark of the judgments of God, and should in the first instance feel the consuming energies of the Holy Spirit.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The same law obtains in the punishment of the heathen as in that of God's professed people. The harvest is not cut until it is ripe. The measure of iniquity must be full before judgment falls. This doctrine was shown in the last vision in its application to the Jews. In the present as compared with the first, of which it is the complement, the same principle is illustrated in relation to the world at large. At the beginning of this night of disclosures, the prophet learned that there was no indication in the state of the heathen world of any such convulsion as his predecessor Haggai had predicted; but, on the contrary, actual inspection by horsemen commissioned for the purpose brought back information that all the earth was quiet and at rest, thus furnishing a painful contrast to the weak and suffering condition of the people of God. Now he learns that this prosperity and peace of the heathen was not a permanent thing. The time had not come, and nothing could be done until it did come. But it was sure to arrive. The wrath of God is not a caprice or an impulse, but the steady, uniform, eternal opposition of his holy nature against all sin. It can no more cease than He can. It is the very element of his being. He is necessarily "of purer eyes than to behold evil." Not more certainly is He infinite in power or wisdom than He is in justice and truth. And these perfections must find expression in his administration of the affairs of the world. Delay is no evidence to the contrary. The accumulation of sins thus produced, only makes more evident the desert of wrath, and causes a deeper destruction when the blow falls.

2. The resting of God's Spirit upon a land is generally the cause of life, holiness, and peace, but sometimes it is the reverse. In visitations of judgment, the Spirit is a consuming fire. It overwhelms, scatters, destroys. It removes out of the way obstacles otherwise insuperable. It turns mountains into plains. It lays low hoary despotisms, and prepares means and access for the gentler forms of diffusing the truth. *Pacem petit ense.* The utter destruction of a godless power is sometimes a necessary preliminary to the spread of the Gospel.

THE CROWN UPON JOSHUA'S HEAD.

Chapter VI. 9–15.

A. *The Symbolic Action; Crowns on Joshua* (vers. 9–11). B. *Its Meaning; The Branch a Priest and King* (vers. 12–15).

9–10 And the word of Jehovah came to me saying, Take[1] from the exiles,[2] from
Cheldai, from Tobiah, and from Jedaiah, and go thou on that day, go[3] into the
11 house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah whither they have come from Babylon; And
take silver and gold and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua, the
12 son of Josedech, the high priest;[4] And speak to him saying, Thus speaketh Jeho-
vah of Hosts, saying, Behold a man whose name is Branch, and from his place he
13 shall grow up,[5] and build the temple of Jehovah. Even He[6] shall build the tem-
ple of Jehovah, and He shall bear majesty, and shall sit and rule upon his throne,
and shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between
14 them both. And the crowns shall be to Chelem, and to Tobiah, and to Jedaiah,
15 and to Hen, the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah. And
they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of Jehovah; and ye shall
know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me to you; and it will come to pass, if ye
will hearken unto the voice of Jehovah your God —[7]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 10. — The infin. absol. לָקוֹחַ, used for the imperative, has no object, and is therefore to be considered as resumed in the לָקַחְתָּ of ver. 11. This requires us to view the latter half of ver. 10 as a parenthesis, which, as Pressel says, "is somewhat harsh but not harsher than we often find even in German" or in English.

2 Ver. 10. — גּוֹלָה, abstract for concrete = the exiles.

3 Ver. 10. — The repetition of בָּאתָ is one of the cases which have subjected Zechariah's style to the charge of being heavy and dragging.

4 Ver. 11. — This is noted by the Masorites as one of the twenty-six verses, each of which contains all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

5 Ver. 12. — יִצְמָח — צֶמַח. Observe the paronomasia: "a sprout will sprout up."

6 Ver. 13. — The first word is very emphatic, *Even He* and not another. So in the next clause, and *He*.

7 Ver. 15. — The aposiopesis is striking (cf. Luke xiii. 9), "And if it bear fruit ——; and if not, then," etc.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Some interpreters consider what is here related as another vision, but manifestly without reason, since it has none of the peculiarities of the visions, is historical in its nature, and is introduced with the customary formula which denotes an ordinary communication from God, "the word of Jehovah came to me." But while it is not one of the night visions, it is closely connected with them, as appears from the fact that it was given at the same time; that it resumes the principal feature of the most striking of the whole, namely, the fourth, by describing yet further the Branch; and that it stands in a close relation of contrast to the vision immediately preceding. That one set forth the severe judgments in store for all the foes of the theocracy. This symbolic action develops the other side of the great subject. The outlying heathen are not all to be destroyed or exterminated. On the contrary, they will one day cease their hostility to the covenant people, and even enter into cordial coöperation with them in building up and adorning the kingdom of God. This is simply a different form of the same thought given in the second chapter of Haggai, where we are told (ver. 7) that the desire (= desirable things) of all nations shall come, and the Lord will fill the house with glory. We have then here an historical appendix to the night visions, which brings out more clearly their main theme, and especially emphasizes the view that the heathen nations are not simply to be disarmed of their opposition, but made active helpers in the advancement of God's kingdom and glory.

a. The Symbolic Action (vers. 9–11). — Ver. 9. **And the word,** etc. Therefore this is not a vision.

Ver. 10. **Take from the exiles . . . . from Babylon.** The exiles is a term applied by Ezra (iv. 1; vi. 19) to the returned captives (iv. 1; vi. 19), but here evidently means those who were still in exile, and of whom the persons named as having come from Babylon, were representatives. Of these three persons and their host Josiah, we know nothing more than what the passage itself relates. Several interpreters (Jerome, Hengstenberg, Baumgarten), following the LXX., consider their names as significant, but there is nothing to require this

here more than elsewhere, nor do the results thus obtained contribute anything to the proper understanding of the section. The E. V. makes אֲשֶׁר the subject of בָּאוּ (Targum, Peshito, Vulgate, Luther, Henderson), but it is better to take it as an accusative of place, referring to the house of Josiah (Nordheimer, *H. G.*, 902, 1 *b.*). So Hengstenberg, Köhler, Keil, etc. According to this view the three men are deputies from the Jews in Babylon, and the fourth was the host with whom they lodged in Jerusalem. **On that day,** the day mentioned (ch. i. 7).

Ver. 11. **Crowns.** The plural which is repeated in ver. 14 must be significant, and represents, if not two distinct diadems, at least one composite crown of two or more parts. The former is the more natural (cf. Rev. xix. 12) and better suited to the connection which treats of the combination of two distinct offices in one person. Ewald, Hitzig, and Bunsen interpolate "and upon the head of Zerubbabel" after the words "high priest;" but for this there is no authority whatever, critical or exegetical.

b. The Explanation and Promise (vers. 12-15). — Vers. 12 and 13 explain the meaning of the symbolical action just commanded.

Ver. 12. **And speak to him.** Joshua of course would know that the regal function, so firmly fixed in the family of David, could not possibly be conferred upon him as an individual, and that therefore its insignia were placed upon his head typically. This is put beyond doubt by the address here made to him. **Behold** points to the Messiah as if he were present. He is called **Branch** as if it were a proper name, as appears not only by the lack of the article, but by the established usage of the earlier Prophets. See on ch. iii. 8. Of this branch or sprout from the fallen trunk of David, it is said, **from his place he will grow up.** Some (LXX., Luther, Hitzig, Pressel, etc.) render this clause impersonally, "there will be sprouting or growth;" but this overlooks the מִן in מִתַּחְתָּיו, and besides, changes the subject without reason. Better is the view (Cocceius, Hengstenberg, Baumgarten, Keil, etc), that the Branch will grow up from his place (cf. Ex. x. 23), *i. e.*, from his own land and nation, not an exotic, but a genuine root-shoot from the native stock to which the promises had been made. **Build the temple** — not the earthly temple then in progress, for this was to be completed by Zerubbabel (iv. 9); not a new and more glorious one of the same kind, for Zerubbabel's temple was to be glorified in the Messianic times (Hag. ii. 7-9; Mal. iii. 1); but (Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Köhler) the spiritual temple of which the tabernacle and Solomon's splendid edifice were only types, the holy house composed of living stones (Eph. ii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 5). Not *a* temple, but *the* temple, — one still in existence and always the same, but destined to an unprecedented exaltation by the Messiah. "The temple of God is one, namely, the Church of the saved, originating in the promise given in Paradise, and lasting to the end of the world" (Cocceius).

Ver. 13. **Even He shall build.** The repetition is not useless, but emphatic, as the expressed pronoun shows. Even *he*, notwithstanding his lowliness of origin, shall accomplish this great work. **Bear majesty,** *i. e.*, kingly glory and honor, for which הוֹד seems to be the proper and normal term (1 Chron. xxix. 25; Dan. xi. 21; Ps. xxi. 5). **Will sit and rule upon his throne.** "The former denotes the possession of the honor and dignity of a king, the latter the actual exercise of royal authority" (Hengstenberg). The suffix in "his throne" refers not to Jehovah (Vitringa), which is too remote, but to the Branch himself, as is shown by the recurrence of the word in the next clause. **And will be a priest.** Ewald and Hitzig render, "there will be a priest upon," etc., which is both arbitrary and unmeaning. Nearly all interpreters, ancient and modern, render as in the text, and understand the clause to mean, that the Branch would be both king and high priest on one and the same throne. **Between them both.** Not the Branch and Jehovah (Cocceius, Vitringa), nor the Branch and an ideal priest (Ewald, Bunsen), nor the royal and the priestly offices (Rosenmüller, Hengstenberg, etc.); but the king and the priest who sit upon the throne, united in one person, the Branch (Hengstenberg, Umbreit, Köhler). Upon this view, **the counsel of peace** cannot mean perfect harmony, for that would be a matter of course — yet Jerome, Michaelis, Maurer, and Hengstenberg favor this view, — but is a counsel which aims at or results in peace, like "the chastisement of our peace" in Is. liii. 5, *i. e.*, which has for its object our peace. The sense, then, is that the Branch, uniting in himself royalty and priesthood, will take such counsel as shall result in peace and salvation for the covenant people.

Vers. 14, 15. The Prophet having explained the meaning of Joshua's coronation, now proceeds to give the reason why the silver and gold of which the crowns were composed, were to be obtained from the messengers of the Jews who lived at a distance from their native land.

Ver. 14. **And the crowns shall be.** The crowns, after having been placed upon the head of Joshua, were not to become his personal property, but to be preserved in the temple as a memorial of the deputies from Babylon. The names of these persons are the same as those given in ver. 10, except the first and last; Helem standing for Heldiah, and Hen for Josiah. In the former case the two names are so nearly alike that there is a general agreement in the view which refers them to the same person, and considers the variation as a copyist's error. In the latter, Keil and Köhler render the second name as an appellative noun with the sense of *favor*, and consider it a record of the gracious hospitality which the son of Zephaniah had shown to the deputies from Babylon. But this is certainly artificial, and it is better to assume that Josiah had this additional name. The object of depositing the crowns in the temple was not simply to do honor to the liberality of the contributors from Babylon, but also to extend the typical significance of the whole proceeding. These men, sending from afar their gifts for the house of God, were types of many who would one day come from heathen lands and help to build the temple of the Lord.

Ver. 15. **And they that are afar off.** A manifest prediction that distant strangers should actively participate in setting up the kingdom of God. **And ye shall know, etc.** The occurrence of this result would be a proof of the divine origin of what is here predicted in word and deed. The last clause, **and it will . . . . your God,** is considered by Hengstenberg and Henderson as an *aposiopesis*, If ye will hearken, then ——. This certainly gives an emphatic and spirited close to the prophecy, and grammatically agrees better with the form of the original than the supposition

that a pronoun has been omitted as the subject of יִהְיֶה. The suppressed apodosis of course is, ye shall participate in all the blessings which the Branch is to secure. For other instances of *aposiopesis*, see Gen. xxxi. 42 and l. 15 (in Hebrew), and the very striking instance (Ps. xxvii. 13). The question, whether Zechariah really performed the symbolical action here enjoined, is left undecided by some (Hengstenberg, Keil), but there seems little reason to doubt that he did, since the crown was to be hung up in the temple as a memorial.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The favorite designation of the Messiah, BRANCH, reappears, with a considerable amplification of its meaning. An elaborate and costly double crown is placed upon the head of Joshua as the type of one who is merely a slender sprout or root-shoot, which grows up out of its own place. This was exactly true of the historical Christ. He did not descend from heaven in visible glory and greatness. He was not born in the purple, nor waited upon by princes and nobles. He did not enter our world with any show or pomp such as his deluded countrymen expected; but, although a lineal heir of David and able to trace his ancestry back to Abraham, he sprang from a decayed family and had a manger for his first resting-place. The Davidic trunk had fallen, and this was a mere sucker growing out of one of the upturned roots. Heaven indeed took notice of the event by the Star in the east, the visit of the Magi, and the songs of the Angels; but the world at large knew little and cared less about the birth at Bethlehem. After the same pattern was his further development. He grew up out of his place in lowly humiliation. For thirty years his home was in Galilee, in the house of a humble carpenter, and during all that time he was known simply as a reputable youth in a country village. An apocryphal Gospel tells marvelous stories of his infancy, but these are pure inventions. The man Christ Jesus grew up as a root out of a dry ground. And even after He commenced his ministry, and did such works as no other man did, and spoke as no other man spake, He was still but a Branch. Crowds at times gathered around Him, but in all cases they soon fell away. In general He was despised and rejected of men. This continued during his life, was especially marked in the circumstances of his death, and even long afterwards characterized his memory, since one of the best Procurators of Judæa could speak of Him as "one Jesus" (Acts xxv. 19); and a century later the most illustrious[1] of Roman historians knew of him only as the author of a pernicious superstition who himself had deservedly died a felon's death. Yet this neglected and forgotten Branch was to accomplish some wonderful things.

2. One of these was to build the Temple of the Lord. His type, Joshua, was busily engaged in forwarding the erection of the new structure on Moriah, and that edifice, by successive additions in a long course of years, became a most stately and magnificent pile. But it was a far nobler building to which the Branch applied himself, one which was truly a habitation of God through the Spirit, one composed of living stones. The glory of the Temple at Jerusalem was that there the Most High manifested his presence; and all beauty of form and grace of ornamentation was valued only in so far as it rendered the house fit for the residence of God. Now the true temple, the spiritual house, is the actual dwelling-place of Jehovah, where He displays the fact, not by signs or symbols, not by a material Shekinah, but by the graces of his Spirit inwrought in the hearts and manifested in the lives of his people. He dwells not merely among them as a whole, but in each particular member. *Ubi Spiritus, ibi ecclesia.* These members vary widely in other respects, but they are all alike characterized by the indwelling of the Spirit, the source of their life and the bond of their connection with Christ, the head. Now it is this living temple which the Branch builds. He is, according to the common Scripture metaphor, the foundation, the corner-stone; but here he appears as builder. Sending forth his servants he began and still continues the work, collecting, shaping, and laying the materials, until already an innumerable multitude have been framed into such a structure as earth never saw before. The Church on earth has many imperfections, yet after allowing for all these, it is still a *coetus Sanctorum*, a *civitas Dei*, a holy temple in the Lord; and it bears witness in every part to the grace and skill of its great Founder. He, only He, did build, could build such a glorious edifice.

3. The source of his power and success is indicated in the very peculiar functions assigned to Him in the text. He is a priest upon his throne,—a combination wholly strange to the experience of the covenant people, and heretofore known to them only in the dim tradition from patriarchal days, of the mysterious Melchisedek who was at once king of Salem and a priest of the most high God. In the Branch, the Aaronic line and the Davidic line should both culminate. He should fulfill the highest ideal of each. As the one, real, atoning priest, he was to attain all ἐξουσίαν for the forgiveness of sins and the removal of guilt; and as the one, real, reigning king, he was to exercise all δύναμιν for the inward support and outward protection of his people. The two functions coincided in extent and object. Those for whom the priest offered and interceded, were the very parties over whom the king extended his beneficent reign. This counsel between the two offices, this harmony of aim and purpose, cannot but insure peace = the highest good, temporal and spiritual, of his people. The combination of right and power is irresistible. So it has been in all the past; so it will be in all the future. This man hath an unchangeable priesthood, and his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed (Heb. vii. 24; Dan. vii. 14). We can see the value of this combination more clearly by considering the consequences, if either function stood alone. Of what avail would be the pardon of sin, if there were no security against its recurrence and dominion in the future? The wiping out of the old score would simply make room for a new one. On the other hand, of what use would be the mastery of all concupiscence for the present and all time to come, so long as no provision was made for the arrearages of former transgression and guilt? The burden of the past would only be the more intolerable as its enormity would be the more clearly discerned and felt. We need a Priest *and* a King, and, blessed be God, we have them, with a resulting counsel of peace.

4. The calling of the Gentiles belongs to the building of the ideal temple. This is set forth typically by taking materials from Babylon for the

1 Tacitus.

double crown to be placed upon Joshua, and directly by the declaration that they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord. This very expression the Apostle Paul uses to designate the Gentile Ephesians (ii. 17), "you that are far off." Zechariah faithfully echoes the words of all his predecessors as to the extent of the final dispensation of grace. The universality indicated in the first promise, and clearly expressed in the oft-repeated covenant with Abraham, was never lost sight of. Even amid the narrow restrictions and close lines of Judaism there were significant intimations that the barriers of race were only incidental and temporary (see on ii. 11), and that one day the light and life of Zion should extend to the ends of the earth. Just as Isaiah (lx. 2, 6, 9) sets forth the future triumph of the Gospel by representing huge caravans as journeying toward Zion, and the ships of Tarshish as engaged in transporting the sons of strangers thither with their silver and their gold, so our Prophet expresses the same truth by depicting the far-off nations as builders in the temple. As living stones they come, and insert themselves in the sacred edifice, being built upon "Jesus Christ Himself, in whom the whole building groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." And not only that, but under the master-builder, they are the means of gathering others, and so lifting yet higher the walls of that spiritual house which is the temple of the living God. The chief upholders to-day of heathen evangelization are nations farthest off from the old seat of the theocracy.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

MOORE: The history of the world is arranged in reference to the destinies of the Church; and the agencies that control that history go forth from the seat of the Church's great head, the unseen temple. Political changes are after all only the moving of the shadow on the earthly dial-plate that marks the mightier revolutions going forward in the heavens.

BRADLEY: *The temple of Jehovah.* If God so loves his Church as to call it his house, to dwell in it and delight in it; if He deems it so sacred as to call it his temple; if He sees so much grandeur and beauty in it as to speak of its glory; surely, we may find in it something to love, something to delight in, something to revere and admire. . . . . *He shall build.* Christ is the builder. (1.) He forms the plan. (2.) He prepares the materials. (3.) He joins the materials together.

JAY: The temple is the Church of God. His people, therefore, should remember that all they have and all they are is the Lord's; and that to take anything pertaining to a temple is not only robbery but sacrilege. . . . . Christ is the sole real builder. All others build only as instruments. Even Paul and Apollos were only ministers by whom men believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. Too often men are insensible of this, and begin like Melancthon, who supposed in his fervor that he should convert all who heard him.

PRESSEL: Every contribution toward the building up of the Church, coming from a true heart, has its memorial before God, and as a testimony before the world of the divinity of the Gospel. . . . The slowness of the far-off nations to enter into the kingdom of Christ, is due not so much to the hardness of their hearts as to the feeble attention of Christians to the voice of their God and Saviour.

III. THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE FAST.

CHAPTERS VII. AND VIII.

1. THE QUESTION PROPOSED: THE PROPHET'S REBUKE.

CHAPTER VII.

A. *The Question* (vers. 1–4). B. *Present Rebuke* (vers. 5–7). C. *Appeal to the Past* (vers. 8–14).

1 And it came to pass in the fourth year of Darius the king that the word of
2 Jehovah came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, in Kislev, when
3 Bethel[1] sent Sharezer and Regem-melech and his men, to entreat Jehovah,[2] to
speak to the priests who were at the house of Jehovah of Hosts, and to the proph-
ets, saying, Shall I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have now[3] done
4, 5 so many years? And the word of Jehovah of Hosts came to me, saying, Speak
to all the people of the land and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned
in the fifth (month) and in the seventh, and that for seventy years, did ye fast at
6 all to me, to me? And when ye eat[4] and when ye drink, is it not[5] ye who eat
7 and ye who drink?[6] [Know ye] not the words which Jehovah proclaimed by the
former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and at peace, and her cities round
about her, and the South, and the Lowland were inhabited?
8 And the word of Jehovah came to Zechariah, saying,

9 Thus spake[7] Jehovah of Hosts, saying,
Judge the judgment of truth,[8]
And show kindness and pity[9] one to another.
10 And widow and orphan,
And stranger and poor man,[10] do not oppress;
And evil against a brother
Conceive ye not in your heart.
11 But they refused to attend,
And offered a rebellious shoulder,
And made their ears too heavy to hear.[11]
12 And their heart they made an adamant,
That they might not hear the law
And the words which Jehovah of Hosts sent by his Spirit,
By means of the former prophets;
And there was great wrath from Jehovah of Hosts.
13 And it came to pass,
That as he cried and they did not hear,
"So they call and I hear not,[12]
Saith Jehovah of Hosts;
14 And I whirl[13] them over all the nations whom they knew not:"
And the land was made desolate behind them,
So that no one goes out or comes in.
And [so] they made the pleasant land a desert.[14]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 2. — בֵּית־אֵל is a proper name here, as it is in Judges xx. 18, 26, 31.

2 Ver. 2. — לְחַלּוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵי. Henderson renders this (here and in viii. 21) in rather superfine English, — to *conciliate the regard*. It is not = pray *before* (E. V.), but simply, to entreat or beseech. Cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12.

3 Ver. 3. — זֶה here is equivalent to our *now*. Gen. xxxi. 38. See Text. and Gram. on i. 12.

4 Ver. 6. — The tenses in the first clause cannot grammatically be rendered as preterites, as E. V.

5 Ver. 6. — The marginal rendering (E. V.) of the question is better than that of the text, as leaving less to be supplied.

6 Ver. 6. — The question, "Is it not ye," etc., implies, "Have I anything at all to do with it? Is it not your own affair entirely?

7 Ver. 9. — The first verb *must* be rendered in the preterit; *spake*, not *speaketh*.

8 Ver. 9. — Judgment of truth. The margin of E. V. is better than the text.

9 Ver. 9. — חֶסֶד, kindness. רַחֲמִים, pity. See for the latter on i. 16.

10 Ver. 10. — As the first four nouns are anarthrous in the original, it is more literal as well as more spirited to render them so in the version.

11 Ver. 11. — In מִשְּׁמוֹעַ, the preposition has its not unusual privative force.

12 Ver. 13. — The change of tense in the latter half of this verse is obliterated in the E. V. The writer passes from narration, and cites the *ipsissima verba* of Jehovah. This is a better explanation than that which makes the future express a past action still continuing (Moore). Köhler and Pressel extend the citation as far as מִשָּׁב, but it is better with Ewald and Umbreit to make it terminate with יְדָעוּם, since the next verb is clearly a preterite.

13 Ver. 14. — וְאֵסָעֲרֵם is not an Aramaic form, but results from the guttural attracting to itself the vowel of the preceding vav. (Green, *Heb. Gram.*, 60, 3 *c.* and 92 *e.*)

14 Ver. 14. — To render the last clause impersonally (Maurer), is enfeebling as well as needless.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This prophecy is separated from what precedes by an interval of nearly two years, during all which time the work upon the Temple had been steadily prosecuted. As the building rose before the eyes of the people and gave promise of a speedy restoration of the ancient worship in its integrity, they became doubtful about the propriety of continuing to observe the solemn fasts by which they commemorated calamitous epochs in their former history, especially the anniversary of the burning of the city and temple by Nebuchadnezzar on the tenth day of the fifth month. Accordingly a message of inquiry was sent to the priests and the prophets, to which the Lord vouchsafed a direct and abundant answer by the hand of Zechariah. The first part of this answer is contained in the chapter before us. After reciting the occasion of the oracle (vers. 1–3) the prophet rebukes them for the formalism of their services (vers. 4–7), and then reminds them of the disobedience of their fathers and the sad doom which followed (vers. 8–14).

Vers. 1–3. *The Question.* Ver. 1. **And it came . . . Kislev.** The original here is peculiar, in that the note of time is torn apart, the year being

first mentioned, and then after the insertion of a clause on another topic, the day and month are stated. Moreover, the latter notation, **in the fourth . . . . Kislev**, must belong both to the clause which precedes it and to the one which follows it in ver. 2, — of which Köhler justly says, that although not impossible, it is certainly harsh. The sense, however, is plain. **Kislev** corresponds to part of November and part of December. The origin and meaning of the name are quite uncertain.

Ver. 2. **When Bethel sent**, etc. The LXX., Vulgate, Cocceius, *et al.*, make Bethel the object or accusative of place, but in that case it would have been preceded by אֶל, or at least אֶת, or made to follow the subject; and besides there seems to be no reason why after the Captivity the Lord should have been sought at Bethel, since neither the altar nor the prophet was there at that time. It must then be the subject, as most expositors hold, but not in the sense of Hengstenberg, as = the congregation of the Lord, the whole people, since there is no usage to sustain this view, but simply = the people of Bethel, many of whom, we know, had returned with Zerubbabel (Ez. ii. 28, Neh. vii. 32), and soon rebuilt their city (Neh. xi. 31). Some make the two following names to be in apposition with Bethel (Ewald, Hitzig), but this is harsh as well as needless. The Bethelites sent two of their number, one of whom has an Assyrian name (Sharezer), and was probably born in exile. Their object was to stroke the face, *i. e.*, to conciliate by caresses, or **to entreat, Jehovah**. It is farther stated in the next verse.

Ver. 3. **To speak to the priests**, etc. The priests as well as the prophets were regarded as organs of divine communications. See Hag. ii. 11, Mal. ii. 7. הִנָּזֵר is not adequately translated by *abstaining, i. e.*, from food, for it means a separation from all the ordinary occupations of life. It is not, therefore, (as Fürst and Keil say) = צוֹם. The question is put in the name of the population of Bethel, but they represented what was a general feeling, and hence the Lord's answer is addressed to the people at large.

Vers. 4-7 contain a reproof of their manner of observing a fast.

Ver. 5. **Speak to all**, etc. The added specification, **to the priests**, indicates that they particularly needed the information thus given, the substance of which is that the fasting was a matter of no consequence to the Lord. He had not commanded it, nor was it observed out of regard to Him. When the people fasted, and when they ate and drank, it was in either case simply with a view to their own interest. It was therefore a matter of supreme indifference to Him, whether they kept this formal observance or not. The text refers not only to the fast in the **fifth** month, but also to one in the **seventh**. This was observed on the anniversary of the murder of Gedaliah and his friends (Jer. xli. 1 ff.). The emphatic repetition, **to me, to me**, in the end of the verse, is the key to its meaning.

Ver. 6. **And when ye eat**, etc. That is, your feasting as well as your fasting, is conducted without regard to me, simply for your own gratification.

Ver. 7. **Know ye not**, etc. The sentence being manifestly incomplete, some supply הֵן after the first word, and render, "Are not these the words," etc. (LXX., Vulgate, Rosenmüller, E. V. margin); but this would require a noun with אֶת to be taken as a nominative, and besides, there is no record elsewhere of any such utterance of God as this view requires. It is better (Mark, Ewald, Pressel, *et al.*) to supply "know ye," and explain the words in question by what follows in vers. 9, 10. יֹשֶׁבֶת. Some critics contend for an intransitive rendering as alone proper for this word (cf. i. 2), but here the sense can scarcely be expressed in English except by a passive form. Certainly it would be an undue liberty to supply וְשֹׁקָטֶת from i. 11, as Kliefoth and Köhler do. **The South and the Lowland** (Shefela), were well defined geographical divisions of Palestine from the time of the Conquest (cf. in Hebrew, Josh. x. 40, xv. 21, 31; Smith, *Dict. Bib.*, 2291, 2296).

Vers. 8-14. Here the prophet reminds his people that the Lord required something else than formal fastings, and that the disobedience of the fathers was the cause of their ruin.

Ver. 9. **Thus spake Jehovah**, etc. The connection requires that the first verb should be rendered strictly in the preterite, and not as the E. V. in the present. **Judgment of truth** is that which is founded upon the actual facts in the case without regard to personal considerations (Ezek. xviii. 8). **Kindness and pity** are related as genus and species, the latter being kindness shown to the unfortunate.

Ver. 10. **And widow and orphan**, etc. This verse specifies some of the chief ways of violating the preceding requisition, and shows that it covers the thoughts of the heart as well as the acts of the members. The singular occurrence of אִישׁ אָחִיו, after a noun in the construct, is explained by Gen. ix. 5, where it stands appositionally, = the man who is his brother. Henderson violates all grammar by rendering (after the LXX.), "think not in your heart of the injury which one hath done to another." The Vulgate would have been a better guide, *malum vir fratri suo non cogitet in corde suo.*

Ver. 11. **But they refused . . . to hear.** The figure **offered a rebellious shoulder** (Neh. ix. 29), is taken from the conduct of an ox or heifer, refusing the yoke. Cf. Hos. iv. 16.

Ver. 12. **And they made**, etc. **Adamant** is a better translation for שָׁמִיר than *diamond* (Pressel, Köhler, etc.), because it suggests only that point for which the term is introduced, namely, its impenetrable hardness. The relative refers to both the preceding nouns, but there is no warrant for giving to **the law** any but its strict and usual sense. This clause well expresses the two factors in all divine revelation, the guiding Spirit and the inspired instruments. The last clause expresses the result of the disobedience and obduracy of the people.

Ver. 13. **And it came to pass**, etc. This verse contains a sudden change in the form of the address. The protasis is in the words of the prophet, but the apodosis; **so they call**, etc., introduces Jehovah as the speaker, and He continues to be such until the second clause of the concluding verse. The sentiment echoes the last words of the first chapter of Proverbs.

Ver. 14. **And I will whirl them**, etc. I prefer the rendering, **whom they knew not**, of the E. V., following the LXX., to the other, "who knew not them," adopted by most critics after the Vulgate. In either case the sense is clear, namely, that they

would fall into the hands of those who being total strangers were the less likely to show compassion. **Goes out or comes in**, literally, goes away and returns again, is an idiomatic phrase, first found in Ex. xxxii. 27, for passing to and fro. Its negative presents a sad picture of entire desolation. The **pleasant land** is a familiar designation of Canaan in its agreeable aspect (Ps. cvi. 24; Jer. iii. 19). This final clause states the result, and to give it its full effect, requires the parenthetic insertion of so in the version. Thus it is made plain that all the calamity which is bewailed on the fast days was brought on by the sinful obduracy of those to whom "the former prophets" spoke by the Spirit, but alas, spoke in vain.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The question of the Bethelites indicates very clearly the wretched formalism into which the people had degenerated. The fasts about which they inquired were not of divine appointment, and had no hold upon the conscience. The same authority which originated them could of course discontinue them. The question itself, as well as the motive from which it sprang, betrayed entire ignorance of the nature and design of Scriptural fasting. It is not an ascetic exercise, and has no intrinsic value whatever. Hence even in the complicated and extensive ritual of the Old Testament, there is mention of only one stated fast — the day of atonement (Lev. xvi. 29), — and that, only by the indirect expression "afflict your souls." In all other cases, and there are very many of them, the service is set forth as strictly *pro re nata*, something springing out of the circumstances at the time, and intended to cease as soon as they ceased. It would seem as if the design was to guard against the very error of the Jews mentioned here, — one that long continued to prevail among them and which centuries afterward was distinctly rebuked by our Lord. At one time the objection was made to him by the disciples of John the Baptist, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast" (Matt. ix. 14, 15). That is, while I am present with my disciples, there is no occasion for any such observance, and if I instituted one, its design would surely be mistaken. Hereafter, circumstances will arise when they will instinctively feel that observances of this kind are called for, and then they will appoint them, and retain them so long as may be necessary. Our Lord does not deny the lawfulness or the expediency of fasting; but He does deny its intrinsic excellence or usefulness. It is an expression of sorrow and humiliation proper to be used on the occasions which call for such feelings; then it is fitted to help the discipline of the soul and to lead to benefits quite beyond itself. Indeed, on such occasions it is a suggestion of nature itself, — nothing being more common than for extreme grief or other mental excitement to take away the appetite for food. But whenever the exercise is made to recur statedly at regular intervals without regard to circumstances, its inevitable tendency is to degenerate into a barren form and a mischievous self-deception.

2. This error is a serious one. Overstrained devotion to ceremonial observances is sure to react disastrously upon morals. Men lose the sense of proportion, and lay more stress upon mint, anise, and cummin than upon judgment and mercy; and they compensate for rigidity in forms by great looseness in substance. Hence in this chapter, Zechariah, before answering the question proposed, exposes the hollowness of mere outward fastings (vers. 5, 6), and then reminds them of the causes of their fathers' ruin (vers. 11, 12). It was not due to any inattention to ritual, but to the disregard of the plainest duties of justice and humanity. They had not only the law written on the heart, and the law engraved on the two tables of stone, but the express and reiterated injunctions of the Prophets against all injustice and oppression; and yet they utterly refused to hear. Their children now were in danger of falling into just the same error. It was true then, as it is now, that no religion is worth anything which does not regulate the life and secure the discharge of social and relative duties. Morality is certainly not piety, but the piety which does not include morality is a mere delusion. It mocks God and insults man.

3. God is represented in Scripture as the guardian of the weak. Widows and orphans, the strangers and the poor, they who are especially exposed to ill treatment, are placed under his powerful protection. To them He makes the most precious promises, while upon their oppressors He denounces the heaviest woes. This feature characterizes the Mosaic legislation, so often thoughtlessly denounced as harsh; it is renewed in the older Prophets before the Captivity, and now reappears again in the closing accents of Old Testament inspiration (cf. also Mal. iii. 5). In respect to these classes, the later dispensation is no advance upon the older, except in the higher sanction contained in the words and works of God manifest in the flesh. One of the surest tests of an intelligent Christianity as well as of a high civilization, is found in the provision made and maintained for those who so often are the victims either of cruel neglect, or, alas, willful oppression! Men need to be continually reminded that such provision is a dictate not merely of reason and humanity, but of Him who has proclaimed Himself the judge of the widow and the helper of the fatherless, who preserveth the stranger, and who hath chosen the poor of this world to be the heirs of his kingdom (Ps. x. 14; lxviii. 5; cxlvi. 9; Jas. ii. 5).

4. The most terrible penalties are penalties in kind. Such as the drunkard pays when at last he feels himself the slave of a vicious habit which he knows is ruining body and soul, and yet he is unable to throw off; or the licentious man when desire survives the power of gratification, and he is tortured by appetites for which exhausted nature has no provision. Similar is it in matters of religion. God calls and men refuse to hear. From the days of Enoch down this has been a common experience. Sometimes a judgment falls or wrath is executed speedily. But ordinarily the retribution comes in the line of the sin. Men awake at last to their true situation, and become alarmed. Then the same process begins as before, with the parties reversed. Men call, but they are not heard. They seek, but do not find. They knock, but no door is opened. There is a painful reminder of the words of the wise man: "They shall eat of the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices" (Prov. i. 31).

"Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet,
Oh, let us in, though late, to kiss his feet!"
"No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

WORDSWORTH: Zechariah's typical and prophetical visions are succeeded by practical instructions. All theological mysteries are consummated in holiness and love. The Jews did well to fast, but not to boast of their fasting and self-mortification. Here is a symptom of that Pharisaical reliance upon outward works of religion, which reached its height in our Lord's age (Matt. vi. 16), and became almost as detrimental to vital piety as idolatry had been in the age before the Captivity. Your fasting was not produced by a deep sense of shame and remorse for sin, as hateful to me and as the cause of your punishment from me. It was not a fast of sorrow for my offended majesty, but for your own punishment. It was not a God-ward sorrow, but a world-ward sorrow (2 Cor. vii. 10).

TILLOTSON: A truly religious fast consists in (1.) The afflicting of our bodies by a strict abstinence that so they may be fit instruments to promote the grief of our minds. (2.) In the humble confession of our sins to God. (3.) In an earnest deprecation of God's displeasure. (4.) In intercession for such spiritual and temporal blessings upon ourselves and others as are needful. (5.) In alms and charity to the poor. (6.) In the actual reformation of our lives.

MOORE: All stated fasts tend to degenerate into superstition, unless there is some strong counteracting agency. The original reference to God is lost in the mere outward act. This is the case with Popish observances of the present day. Selfishness is the bane of all true piety, as godliness is its essence. Warnings of punishment when no signs of it are seen, are often disregarded. They who cherish hard hearts must expect hard treatment. The harder the stone, the harder will be the blow of the hammer to break it. They who will not bear the burden of obedience, must bear the burden of punishment.

HENGSTENBERG: The Jews' estimate of the value of fasting. A custom which had no meaning, except as the outward manifestation of a penitent state of heart, was regarded as having worth in itself, as an *opus operatum*. It was supposed that merit was thereby acquired; and surprise and discontent were expressed that God had not yet acknowledged and rewarded the service of so many years.

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2. THE BLESSINGS OF OBEDIENCE. THE QUESTION ANSWERED.

A. *General Promises and Precepts* (vers. 1–17). B. *Fasts shall become Festivals, and whole Nations be added to the Jews* (vers. 18–23).

CHAPTER VIII.

1 And the word of Jehovah of Hosts came to me,[1] saying,
2 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
I am jealous[2] for Zion with great jealousy,
And with great fury I am jealous for her.
3 Thus saith Jehovah, I am returned to Zion,
And will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;
And Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth,[3]
And the mountain of Jehovah of Hosts the holy mountain.
4 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Yet shall there sit[4] old men and old women in the streets of Jerusalem,
Each having his staff in his hand for very age;[5]
5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls,
Playing in the streets.
6 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Because it will be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this nation in those[6] days,
Shall it be marvelous in my eyes also? saith Jehovah of Hosts.
7 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Behold, I save my people from the land of the rising,
And from the land of the setting of the sun;
8 And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem,
And they shall be my people and I will be their God,
In truth and in righteousness.
9 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts
Let your hands be strong,
Ye who hear in these days these words,

From the mouth of the prophets who spake[7]
On the day the house of Jehovah of Hosts, the temple,[8]
Was founded, that it might be built.
10 For before those days there was no wages for a man
And no wages for a beast,[9]
And no peace to him that went out or came in, because of the oppressor;
And I set[10] all men, each against his neighbor.
11 But now not as in the former days am I
To the remnant of this people, saith Jehovah of Hosts.
12 For[11] there shall be a seed of peace,
The vine shall yield its fruit,
And the earth shall yield its produce,
And the heavens shall give their dew,
And I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these.
13 And it shall be, that as ye were a curse among the nations,
O house of Judah and house of Israel,
So will I save you and ye shall be a blessing;
Fear not, let your hands be strong.
14 For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
As I thought to do evil[12] to you when your fathers provoked me,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts, and I repented not;
15 So have I thought again[13] in these days
To do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah,
Fear ye not.
16 These are the words which ye are to do;
Speak truth, each to his neighbor;
Truth and judgment of peace judge ye[14] in your gates.
17 And let none of you devise the evil of his neighbor in your hearts,
And love not an oath of falsehood;
For all these[15] are what I hate, saith Jehovah.

18–19 And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
The fast of the fourth (month), and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh,
and the fast of the tenth, shall become pleasure and joy to the house of Judah,
and cheerful feasts; but love ye truth[16] and peace.
20 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
It shall yet[17] be that peoples[18] will come,
And the inhabitants of many cities;
21 And the inhabitants of one (city) shall go to another, saying,
Let us go speedily to entreat Jehovah[19]
And to seek Jehovah of Hosts.
I will go also.
22 And many peoples and strong nations shall come
To seek Jehovah of Hosts in Jerusalem,
And to entreat Jehovah.
23 Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,
In those days it shall come to pass
That ten men of all languages of the nations shall take hold;
Even shall take hold of the skirt of a Jew,
Saying, we will go with you,
For we have heard that God is with you.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — The word אֵלַי wanting in the Masoretic text, is found in numerous MSS. and several editions, and is supported by the Syriac and Targum.

2 Ver. 2. — "I am jealous," not as E. V. "I was." The Hebrew tense here seems to be = the Greek perfect, in the sense "I have been and still am."

3 Ver. 3. — *The* city of truth, not *a* city as E. V., but one preëminent in this respect.

4 Ver. 4. — יֵשְׁבוּ. The literal meaning *sit* is both more accurate and more expressive than the derived sense *dwell*, adopted in the E. V. from the Vulgate.

5 Ver. 4. — " Very age." This archaism is better than the literal " abundance of days " in margin of E. V.

6 Ver. 6. — הָהֵם, according to usage, must be rendered *those*. So Dr. Riggs (*Suggested Emendations*), who however is not happy in suggesting the marginal rendering of the E. V. as preferable to the textual, in the case of the verb in this clause. The literal sense of יִפָּלֵא is to be *singled out*, *distinguished*, *wonderful*, and the word here expresses something not only *difficult*, but so difficult as to be marvelous or incredible.

7 Ver. 9. — אֲשֶׁר requires a verb to be supplied. Some suggest בָּאוּ, but דִּבְּרוּ seems better.

8 Ver. 9. — The grammatical construction here is awkward, yet better than E. V., which seems to imply a difference between the house of Jehovah and the temple.

9 Ver. 10. — The feminine suffix in אֵינֶנָּה refers to the nearer preceding noun.

10 Ver. 10. — In וָאֲשַׁלַּח the vav convers. takes Pattach in conformity to the compound Sheva which follows (Green *H. G.*, 99 *b*).

11 Ver 12. — Keil renders כִּי *but*, but the usual signification *for* is as suitable and idiomatic.

12 Ver. 14. — לְהָרַע is in contrast with לְהֵיטִיב in ver. 15, and they should be so rendered — to *do evil* and to *do good*; whereas E. V. gives the former as *punish*, and Henderson *afflict*.

13 Ver. 15. — שַׁבְתִּי = again. See on v. 1, vi. 1.

14 Ver. 16. — מִשְׁפַּט — שִׁפְטוּ. To render this " Execute judgment " (E. V., Henderson), is misleading, for the words express the pronouncing, not the executing of judgment. Noyes renders, " Judge according to truth, and for peace," etc.

15 Ver. 17. — אֶת־כָּל־אֵלֶּה is to be taken as an *accus. absol.*

16 Ver. 19. — The E. V. renders the last clause, " love the truth ; " and so the Genevan. But both omit the article before " peace," although the Hebrew has it before each noun.

17 Ver. 20. — After עֹד we must supply יִהְיֶה.

18 Ver. 20. — עַמִּים = *peoples*. This plural, found twice in E. V. (Rev. x. 11, xvii. 15), should have been used here, and in x. 9, xii. 2, 3, 4 ,6, xiv. 12, and often elsewhere, to avoid ambiguity.

19 Ver. 21. — לְחַלּוֹת. See on vii. 2.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

In the preceding chapter the Prophet had rebuked the people for their formalism, and set forth the dreadful consequences of disobedience. Now he turns to the other side of the subject and paints an exquisite picture of the results of conformity to the Divine will. Vers. 1–3. The restoration of purity. — Vers. 4–6. Wonderful peace and prosperity. — Vers. 7, 8. Rescue of all captives from every quarter. — Vers. 9–13. General fertility in place of the previous drought and want. — Vers. 14, 15. Future execution of promises as sure as past execution of threats. — Vers. 16, 17. Moral conditions of prosperity. — Vers. 18, 19. Fasts shall become festivals. — Vers. 20–23. Lively statement of the extension of God's kingdom.

The chapter is divided into two parts by the phrase, " And the word of Jehovah of Hosts came to me " (ver. 1 and ver. 18). Each of these parts is again divided into separate utterances by the recurring formula, " Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts." The first contains seven of these segments (vers. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 14); the second has but three (vers. 19, 20, 23). Jerome justly explains these reiterated references to the Almighty as meaning, " Do not consider these words to be my own, and therefore disbelieve them as coming from a man; they are the promises of God."

(*a*.) *General Promises and Precepts*, (vers. 1–17). — Ver. 1. **And the word of Jehovah, etc.** See the same formula, *ante* i. 7, iv. 8.

Ver. 2. **I am jealous . . . . for her.** For the usage and the sense, see on i. 14. Both passages speak of wrath, but there the *object* of the wrath is stated (the nations), here, the *cause* (Zion). This vehement affection manifests itself in the ways described in the next verse.

Ver. 3. **I am returned to Zion.** He had forsaken his dwelling-place when Jerusalem was given up to her foes, and Ezekiel had seen in vision the glory of Jehovah departing (xi. 23). Now he would return, and in consequence, the city would be called **the city of truth,** *i. e.*, where truth is found, and Moriah **the holy mountain;** which does not mean that they would actually bear these names, but that they would deserve them as expressing their real character. The strict fulfillment of this promise must be referred to the Messianic period.

Vers. 4, 5. **Yet shall there sit, etc.** This beautiful picture represents the extremes of life as dwelling in all security and happiness in the midst of Jerusalem. Long life and a multitude of children were ordinary theocratic blessings (Ex. xx. 12; Deut. vii. 13, 14; Ps. cxxviii. 3–5), and this promise must in part at least relate to the period between Zerubbabel and Christ. There is a curious verbal coincidence in the words of the author of 1 Maccabees (xiv. 9), describing the peaceful prosperity which prevailed in Judæa under the rule of Simon: " The ancient men sat all in the streets, communing together of good things, and the young men put on glorious and warlike apparel." But the full realization has been seen only under a later economy.

Ver. 6. **Because it will be marvelous, etc.** The Lord confirms their faith in his words by reminding them that what seemed incredible to them was not therefore incredible to Jehovah. The common explanation of the second clause, supposes גַּם to stand for הֲגַם, as in 1 Sam. xxii. 8, and the question to imply a negative answer. This is simple and pertinent, especially if we, like the E. V., render הָהֵם *these*, instead of *those*, which is

its customary sense as denoting the farther demonstrative. But even according to the rendering, **in those days,** *i. e.*, when this shall come to pass, the sense is better than with Köhler to make the second clause an affirmation, and explain the passage as saying that it would be right for the people to regard it as marvelous, for it would appear such even to Jehovah himself. **Remnant of this nation.** See Haggai i. 12-14.

Vers. 7, 8. **Behold I save my people . . . . righteousness.** Jehovah will rescue his people from all lands as far as the sun shines, install them again in Jerusalem and renew the old covenant relation, — He their God and they his people (xiii. 9); and this, in the exercise on both sides of **truth and righteousness** (Hos. ii. 21, 22). Henderson, Köhler, Pressel, *et al.*, refer this to the restoration of the Jews still scattered abroad, but the words are too large to admit of so narrow a restriction, nor is there any historical evidence of any such general return of the *diaspora* to Palestine. Jerusalem must stand here as elsewhere for the Messianic kingdom. On the basis of these promises, Zechariah proceeds to encourage the people.

Ver. 9. **Let your hands,** etc. To have the hands strong = to be of good courage (Judg. vii. 11; 2 Sam. xvi. 21). A reason for this courage is shown in the description of those to whom it is addressed. They are those who hear what the later Prophets say, *e. g.*, in vers. 2-8 of this chapter. These later Prophets (Haggai and Zechariah) had appeared at the time when the foundation of the temple was laid, and the good effects of their activity already to be seen were a pledge of what should follow. It is unnecessary with Hitzig to conceive בְּיוֹם as put for מִיּוֹם, but he is happy in the suggestion that the last words of the verse **that it might be built,** are intended to emphasize the thought that this second founding of the temple (Hag. ii. 15-18), unlike the first (Ezra iii. 10), should issue in the completion of the building.

Vers. 10-12 present the contrast between the present and the former times.

Ver. 10. **Before those days,** namely, in which work on the temple was resumed. **No wages.** The labor of man and beast yielded so little result that it might be said to be none. There was also an entire absence of internal quiet to **him that went out or came in,** *i. e.*, men engaged in their ordinary occupations. הַצָּר, rendered by the ancient versions as an abstract noun, is made concrete by nearly all the moderns. That this does not refer wholly to a heathen oppressor is made plain by the following clause.

Ver. 11. **But now** makes vivid the contrast with the opening words of the preceding verse.

Ver. 12. **For there shall be . . . . peace.** This clause is variously construed. Some say, "the seed shall be secure" (Targum, Peshito), or "prosperous" (E. V., Henderson), which is ungrammatical. Others, "the seed of peace, namely, the vine, shall," etc. (Keil, Köhler), and they say that the vine is thus called because it can be produced only in peaceful times; but is not war just as destructive to any other fruit of the earth? I prefer the view of the Vulgate and Pressel given above, a general statement of productiveness of which the following clauses give the details. "Future abundance will compensate for the drought and scarcity of the past" (Jerome).

Ver. 13 sums up all the blessings in a single utterance. **As ye were a curse,** etc. This does not mean that they would become a source of blessing to the nations (a view which Pressel urges with great zeal, but manifestly without ground), but an *example* of blessedness, and therefore they would be employed in a formula of benediction, just as they had been used for an imprecatory formula (cf. Gen. xlviii. 20; Jer. xxix. 22). — **Israel.** See on p. 30 *a* the remark on a similar occurrence of this name in i. 19. It is very significant. "The idea that the ten tribes still exist somewhere in the world, and are still to be restored in their tribal state, has arisen from a misconstruction of those prophecies which refer to the return from Babylon" (Henderson).

Vers. 14-17. The two former of these verses confirm the foregoing promise, and the two latter indicate a condition of its performance.

Ver. 14. **And I repented not.** Just as the threatening did not fail of its execution, so you may be sure the promise will not.

Vers. 16, 17. **These are the words.** There is no need of giving to הַדְּבָרִים the doubtful meaning *things* (E. V., Henderson), since the ordinary sense *words* is entirely suitable. These "words" are, just as above in vii. 9, 10, first positive (ver. 16), then negative (ver. 17). **Judgment of peace** is such judgment as promotes peace, but this is always founded upon **truth. Your gates,** as the places where justice was usually administered. The first clause of ver. 17 is curiously reversed in meaning by Henderson: "think not in your hearts of the injury which one hath done to another," — a sense which the Hebrew cannot have. The last clause is very emphatic in the original, lit., "For as to all these things, they **are what I hate.**"

b. Fasts shall become Festivals, and the Nations attracted (vers. 18-23). — Ver. 18. Here begins the second **word of Jehovah.** See ver. 1.

Ver. 19. **The fast of the fourth month,** etc. For the fasts of **the fifth** month and **the seventh,** see on vii. 3-5. The fast of the fourth month was on account of the taking of Jerusalem (Jer. xxxix. 2); that of **the tenth** was in commemoration of the commencement of the siege (Jer. lii. 4). All these fasts were to be turned into festivals of joy. Not, as Grotius says, that the observance should be retained only with a change of feeling and purpose; but that the general condition should be so happy and prosperous as to render fasting unsuitable. The last clause reminds them of the condition upon which these promises were suspended.

Ver. 20. **Yet shall it be that,** etc. The position of **yet** renders it very emphatic, as if to say, Notwithstanding all past desolations, this shall surely come to pass. **Peoples,** that is to say, not individuals merely, but entire nations. The connection, apparently dropped at the end of this verse, to allow the mention of the reciprocal summons in the next verse, is resumed with the same (יָבֹאוּ) in ver. 22.

Ver. 21. **And the inhabitants of one city,** etc. The mutual appeal stated here greatly enlivens the representation. The emphatic infinitive is very well expressed in the E. V. **Let us go speedily,** although Prof. Cowles prefers *earnestly*. The last clause, **I will go also,** is the prompt response of each of the parties addressed.

Ver. 22. **And many peoples,** etc. This verse takes up and completes the statement begun in verse 20, by reciting the object of the journey, namely, the worship of **Jehovah.**

Ver. 23. **Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,** etc

An important addition. Not only will the heathen go in streams to Jerusalem to worship Jehovah, but they will seek a close and intimate union with the Jews as a nation. אֲשֶׁר, which Henderson says is redundant, is rather emphatic, and the clause is to be construed as the similar one at the commencement of ver. 20. **Ten men,** a definite number for an indefinite (Gen. xxxi. 7). Each of these ten representative men stands for a distinct nation, since they each speak a different language, as appears from the added clause, **of all languages of the nations,** where the singularity of the expression seems designed to emphasize this diversity. וְהֶחֱזִיקוּ is simply a resumption of the same verb in the former clause. **We will go with you,** not merely to the house of God (Hitzig), but in all other ways (Ruth i. 16). On **God is with you,** cf. 2 Chron. xv. 9. Henderson explains all this as fulfilled in the number of proselytes made to Judaism after the restoration. But surely neither "many peoples" nor "strong nations" ever in a body joined themselves to the covenant people. He says that "Jerusalem" cannot be understood otherwise than literally. But most persons will think it cannot be understood in that way at all, for how could such a city contain nations? "That these are said to come to Jerusalem is due to the necessary modes of Jewish thought. That was the only way in which the Jews before Christ could conceive of real conversions, — the only language descriptive of conversion which they could understand. They had not yet reached the idea that God can be worshipped acceptably and spiritually just as well anywhere else as at Jerusalem. Hence those glorious conversions of Gentile nations which are to take place far down in the ages of the Gospel dispensation, if foretold at all by Jewish prophets and for Jewish readers, must be presented in thoroughly Jewish language and in harmony with Jewish conceptions. So we ought to expect to find it throughout the Old Testament Prophets, and so we do find it" (Cowles).

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The beginning and the indispensable condition of all true prosperity is the presence of God. Hence the very first article in the prophet's statement of the happy prospects of his countrymen is Jehovah's assurance, "I am returned to Zion." His absence, strikingly depicted in the vision in which Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord depart from the threshold of the sanctuary, had caused all the woes of Israel, — invasion, conquest, exile, bondage. His return was the only sure pledge of permanent restoration. This, according to the 46th Psalm, is the river the streams whereof make glad the city of God; "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved." God's presence in heaven makes all its bliss, and his presence on earth makes the nearest approach to that bliss. But as He is a God of truth and holiness, they who enjoy his presence must partake of both. Wickedness cannot dwell with Him. As Calvin says, "He is never idle while He dwells in his people, for He cleanses away every kind of impurity that the place where He is may be holy." The proof of his presence, therefore, is not any partial, outward, or transient reform, but the growth and prevalence of holiness founded on truth, ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας, Eph. iv. 24.

2. "Longevity and a numerous offspring were specially promised under the old dispensation," but nowhere is that promise so beautifully set forth as in the scene which Zechariah calls up, — the old man leaning upon his staff, and groups of happy children playing in the streets. No pestilence stalks over the land, no war decimates the population, no famine wastes flesh and strength. The extremes of human life are happy, each in its appropriate way, and all that lie between are in the same peaceful condition. The classes which are most exposed and most defenseless being in complete and conscious security, the others in the prime and vigor of their days must needs be exempt from fear and anxiety. All this was the more impressive to the prophet's contemporaries because of its contrast with the days when death came up into the windows and cut off the children from the streets, — when the husband was taken with the wife, the aged with him that was full of days (Jer. ix. 21, vi. 11). There is no need of spiritualizing the description. It serves well in its literal sense to express what is realized already under the beneficent reign of the Prince of Peace, and will become universal and abiding when his kingdom is established over the earth.

3. The chronic sin of human nature is unbelief. Men stagger at the greatness of the divine promises. This is shown not only by the worldly, of whom the standing pattern is that lord in the court of Jehoram, who, when Elisha predicted in the midst of famine a speedy abundance of supplies, exclaimed, If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? (2 Kings vii. 2); but even by the godly, as illustrated in the case of Moses, who, when God engaged to sate Israel with flesh for a whole month in the wilderness, incredulously reminded Him that there were 600,000 footmen, plainly implying that the thing was impossible. And yet Moses had seen all the wonders wrought in Egypt. In like manner the restored exiles regarded the glowing statements of Zechariah. They refused to accept them, and so lost the comfort and stimulus they would otherwise have enjoyed. The prophet puts his finger upon the cause of this irrational unbelief, when he suggests that they judged God by themselves, that they measured his power by their own understanding. It is absolutely necessary to raise our thoughts above the world, to bid adieu to human standards of probability, and to keep in mind the infinite excellence of the Most High. There are very many things of which one can only repeat what the Master said to his disciples, — "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matt. xix. 26). Faith in the divine omnipotence is easy so long as only hypothetical cases are concerned; but when a question of practical duty is involved, and our faith requires us to run counter to all the maxims of worldly wisdom, it is another matter. It is this feature which gave such a heroic aspect to the course of Abraham when "against hope he believed in hope," and for scores of years persevered in the expectation of an event which was naturally quite impossible, just because he was "fully persuaded that what God had promised He was also able to perform" (Rom. iv. 21). It is needful always to remember that God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways, but as high above them as the heavens are high above the earth. Faith, therefore, always has abundant warrant. The trouble is that so many, like Thomas, want to *see* first, and then believe. But the special, peculiar blessing is for those who, without seeing, believe what God says, just because He says it.

4. The argument *a fortiori* is proverbially strong, and as it is here presented by the prophet, offers

great encouragement to weak faith. God reminds Israel that the wrath incurred by their fathers had been actually visited upon them, no repentance on God's part interposing to avert the blow. Even so should it be with his purposes of mercy; and thus, the very sorrows of the past became pledges for the hopes of the future. The Most High does not willingly afflict, He has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth; yet when the limit of forbearance is reached, He executes the fierceness of his anger, and his threatenings are verified to the letter. Every Jew saw this in the deep furrows the Chaldæan conquest had imprinted on his native land. But if Jehovah carried out his purposes so effectively in the strange work of judgment, how much more would He in the kind, congenial work of beneficence and blessing? If the word of justice had such a complete and ample verification, would not the word of mercy be still more signally illustrated and confirmed? In this view even the gloomy desolation of the Dead Sea and the ruins of Nineveh and Tyre confirm the faith and hope which expect the world-wide blessings of the latter day. The illustrations of God's severity will be surpassed by those of his goodness.

5. The truest test of religious character is found in the degree of our sympathy with God. If we love what He loves and hate what He hates, then are we his children, and bear his image. Now what God hates particularly is not neglect of outward observances, but all departures from the law of love, — evil acting, evil speaking, evil thinking toward our neighbor. And if we are right-minded we shall shun these things, not for policy's sake, nor even from abstract considerations of propriety, but because they are so offensive to God. This was what underlay the continence of Joseph under a fierce temptation, — How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God? And this is the only trustworthy support against the assaults of the adversary. We must have a resolute loyalty to the divine administration; and say with David, "I know, O Lord, that all thy judgments are right," or with Paul, "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." We may, we must have sympathy with our fellows, but first and before all we are to cultivate the same moral affections as our Maker exercises. The farther this culture proceeds, the more acceptable we become to Him and the truer to the best interests of men. It is the more important to emphasize this truth because in our own day there is a persistent attempt in various quarters to introduce in a disguised form the dreadful error which Paul represents (Rom. i. 25), as lying at the root of the gross idolatry and depravity of the heathen world — the worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator. Men reverse the order laid down by our Saviour, and make regard for man the first and great commandment. The "enthusiasm of humanity" is substituted for obedience to God and love to the Lord Jesus, and the sanctions of religion, properly so called, are quietly ignored. Comte's proposed worship of *Le grand Etre*, collective humanity, only put in a concrete form the theoretical principles actuating many who ridiculed this new philosophical religion. He pushed things to their logical result. Yet every page of Scripture teaches that integrity and philanthropy are not piety, and every fresh leaf that is turned in human experience shows that the true love of man is rooted in the love of God, and that no sympathy can be permanently relied upon which is not fed from supernal sources.

6. The lively, dramatic form in which Zechariah predicts the conversion of the Gentiles, is noteworthy. A general movement among the nations; the inhabitants of one city running to another with the eager summons to seek Jehovah, "let us go speedily," lest we be too late; the instant answer, "I will go also;" different nationalities crowding around one Jew and seizing even the hem of his garment; all coveting fellowship with the obscure child of Israel, simply because they had heard that God was with him. Nothing could have seemed more unlikely to the contemporaries of the prophet, yet how exactly it has been fulfilled! The whole Roman Empire with the vast multitude of peoples it contained, and very many more who never saw the imperial eagles, have submitted to the authority of a Saviour who was a Jew; all rested their hopes for eternity upon a Jew. Other nations have been centres and sources for philosophy, science, art, literature, law, and government; but in the matter of the knowledge of God, the writings of Jews are the only and universal standard. For centuries past the mightiest intellects and largest hearts of the race have breathed the spirit and studied the words of these living oracles. The Jewish outward polity has disappeared, the nation has been scattered as no nation ever was before or since, a bitter and irrational prejudice against them characterizes a large part of Christendom; and yet the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is recognized as the one supreme Creator and Lord of the universe, in the best thought of the civilized world. And at this day literally men of all nations and kindreds and tribes and tongues are, almost without a figure, laying hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew. They cast in their lot with those whom God chose to be a people for Himself, and are resting their hopes upon that crucified Jew who is the Saviour of the world. All other gods are idols. All other faiths are decrepit. All other religions are forms. The hope of Israel alone has survived the vicissitudes of time and the revolutions of earth, and flourishes in immortal youth, making fresh conquests every day, constantly entering new fields, breaking up the apathy of ages, undermining superstitions hoar with the rime of a thousand years, and calling forth from the ends of the earth the old cry, Come, let us go speedily to seek Jehovah of Hosts.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

MOORE: ver. 2. Men judge God by themselves, in interpreting his promises, much oftener than in interpreting his threatenings. — Ver. 17. When God covenants with his people, He also covenants with their children. — Ver. 20–23. All true piety is instinct with the missionary spirit, — desire for the salvation of others.

PRESSEL: ver. 23. Shall we delay our missionary efforts until Heathens, Mohammedans, and Jews seize us by the skirt? No, for if that had been the rule, where would we ourselves have been? No, but on the contrary, let us like brothers seize them by the hand and lead them to the Lord.

Again: No one can be another's leader to the Lord, unless it be perceived that God is with him; but wherever that is plainly seen, men gladly seek such guidance.

JEROME. *Shall it be marvelous.* Who would have supposed that the same imperial power which destroyed our churches and burnt our Bibles, should now rebuild the former at public expense, in splendor of gold and various marbles, and restore the latter in golden purple and jeweled bindings?

PART SECOND.

FUTURE DESTINY OF THE COVENANT PEOPLE.

CHAPTERS IX.-XIV.

The genuineness of these chapters as a constituent part of the prophecies uttered by the Zechariah who flourished after the Captivity, has been contested since the middle of the seventeenth century. The arguments *pro* and *con* have been considered in the Introduction. According to the traditional and correct view, they contain such further disclosures of God's purposes respecting his kingdom as He was pleased to communicate to his servant Zechariah after what is contained in the previous portion of the book had been recorded. Whether these six chapters were delivered all at once, or were set forth in parts which afterwards were collected by the author into one whole, cannot now be determined. The only apparent mark of division they contain is found in the title prefixed to ch. ix., and afterwards repeated at the beginning of ch. xii. This is used by some to justify a distribution of the contents into two burdens or oracles — a distribution which may be admitted as a matter of convenience and as indicating in general a progress in the order of thought and revelation, but which must not be pressed too closely, since at times the prophet, just as is the case with his predecessors before the exile (Is., etc.), turns upon his steps and resumes matters which have been already treated of. The transitions of the writer are often rapid, and the connection is consequently obscure, but the general drift of this outlook upon the future is plain. Great blessings are in store for the covenant people, sometimes in the shape of victories achieved by them, at others in that of conquests wrought for them. A great deliverer is to appear who unites in himself the seemingly contradictory features found in the earlier Messianic representations; on one hand suffering, rejected, despised, slain; on the other, a mighty king, ruling, however, not by force but by spiritual power, attracting multitudes in penitence and love to his side, and establishing a universal dominion. This, however, is not accomplished without suffering on the part of his people. They make their Shepherd suffer, and in turn themselves are brought under the harrow. They are visited by terrible calamities which purge away the unworthy members of the kingdom. But even the select body, they who are faithful, have fierce conflicts with the outside world. But they are delivered by the wonderful interposition of Jehovah. Then the Gentiles, instead of being destroyed, are converted, and press into the kingdom of God, the limits of which are made coextensive with those of the whole earth.

Such are the leading points of this interesting portion of prophetic Scripture. The particulars will be elucidated, as far as may be, in the detailed exposition.

A. THE FIRST BURDEN.

CHAPTERS IX.-XI.

This stretches over the period between the fall of the Persian Empire and the appearance of our Lord. Ch. ix. discloses a series of deliverances for God's people, one of which (vers. 1–8) is wrought by a most destructive visitation upon their present heathen ruler, which falls in desolating strokes upon many of their neighbors, but is effectually warded off from themselves, so that Jerusalem stands like an oasis in the desert. The other describes an actual conflict with an enemy who is named, Javan (= Greece), and who is subdued through the intervention of the Lord going forth with whirlwind and lightning. In consequence, his people shine like the flashing gems of a diadem. Between these two martial scenes, the prophet hails the vision of a lowly, peaceful king, who without arts or arms achieves a bloodless victory, and inaugurates an empire which reaches to the ends of the earth. It would seem as if after the account of the first deliverance, the prophet wished to suggest that this was only an installment of what was to come, and therefore he held up for brief view the glowing picture of the mighty yet peaceful monarch and his world-wide dominion, and then at once turns to remind his readers that there was much to be done on a lower scale before the advent of this peculiar ruler. Ch. x. continues and enlarges the promises with which the previous chapter closed; especially emphasizing the possession of native rulers. In the latter part the speaker passes insensibly to a similar and yet more glorious achievement of God in behalf of his earthly kingdom, one which looks to a far more distant future. Ch. xi. opens a new disclosure, symbolical and mysterious in its form, yet plainly indicating a rejection of the ancient Church because of her rejection of the Good Shepherd, which is described at length, with wonderful vividness of detail and no small degree of dramatic power.

These three chapters will well reward the most patient study, because if their mutual relations and general import be satisfactorily ascertained, great aid is gained for solving the yet more serious difficulties contained in the closing portion of the book. Prophecy, while by its very nature it is lofty and mysterious, is neither arbitrary nor disjointed. It proceeded from one Spirit and has a settled scheme and purpose to the consummation of which all its parts directly tend. Notwithstanding the existence of many variations of form, style, and outward appearance, there is an underlying coherence worthy of the divine inspiration. A single step firmly gained anywhere, therefore, furnishes good hope for what is to follow. The "analogy of faith" is a principle of vast use in doctrinal theology; it is of none the less application in the field of exegesis and especially in that of the prophetic Scriptures.

1. *Judgment upon the Land of Hadrach* (ch. ix., vers. 1–8). 2. *Zion's King of Peace* (vers. 9, 10). 3. *Victory over the Sons of Javan* (vers. 11–17). 4. *Further Blessings of God's People* (ch. x.). 5. *Israel's Rejection of the Good Shepherd* (ch. xi.).

1. JUDGMENT UPON THE LAND OF HADRACH.

Chapter IX. 1–8.

A. *A destructive Visitation befalls Hadrach and Damascus* (ver. 1). B. *It destroys also Hamath, Tyre, and Sidon* (vers. 2–4). C. *The Philistine Cities suffer likewise, but a Remnant is saved* (vers. 5–7). D. *The Covenant People are protected from all Harm* (ver. 8).

1 The burden of the word of Jehovah upon the land of Hadrach,
And Damascus is its resting place;[1]
For Jehovah has an eye[2] upon man,
And upon all the tribes of Israel —
2 And Hamath also [which][3] borders thereon,
Tyre and Sidon, because[4] it is very wise.
3 And Tyre built for herself a stronghold,[5]
And heaped up silver as dust,
And gold as the mire of the streets.
4 Behold the Lord will seize[6] her,
And smite her bulwark in[7] the sea,
And she herself shall be consumed by fire.
5 Ashkelon sees it and is afraid,
Gaza also, and trembles exceedingly,
And Ekron, for her hope is put to shame,[8]
And the king perishes from Gaza,
And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.
6 And a mongrel[9] dwells in Ashdod,
And I cut off the pride of the Philistines.
7 And I take away his blood out of his mouth
And his abominations from between his teeth;
And even he[10] remains to our God,
And he becomes like a prince[11] in Judah,
And Ekron like the Jebusite,
8 And I encamp for my house against[12] an army,[13]
Against him that goeth hither and thither,[14]
And no oppressor shall come over them any more,
For now I see with mine eyes.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — מְנֻחָתוֹ = resting-place, permanent abode.

2 Ver. 1. — עֵין אָדָם, *gen. obj.*, an eye upon man. So LXX. and most critics.

3 Ver. 2. — Before תִּגְבָּל we must supply אֲשֶׁר. The latter half of ver. 1 is parenthetical. "Hamath *also*," *i. e.* as well as Damascus, is a resting-place of the burden.

4 Ver. 2. — כִּי takes its usual sense, *because*. To render *although* is enfeebling as well as needless.

5 Ver. 3. — The paronomasia in צוֹר מָצוֹר cannot be reproduced in English.

6 Ver. 4. — יוֹרִשֶׁנָּה is not will *dispossess* (Burg., Hend.), nor *impoverish* (Hitzig, Ewald), nor *deliver up* (Heng., Kliefoth), but *seize*, *conquer*, as in exactly similar connection, Josh. viii. 7, xvii. 12 (Maurer, Köhler).

7 Ver. 4. — בַּיָּם. *In*, not *into*, as Henderson and Noyes render.

8 Ver. 5. — הוֹבִישׁ. Here, as elsewhere (Jer. ii. 26), the Hiphil takes a passive sense: the subject of the verb is not Ekron (as some editions of the E. V. punctuate the clause), but מֶבָּטָהּ.

9 Ver. 6. — מַמְזֵר. *Mongrel* is a better, because more significant rendering than *alien* (Genevan, *stranger*), adopted by most critics, after the LXX. ἀλλογενής. Dr. Van Dyck, in the *Arabic Bible*, gives زنيم = bastard.

10 Ver. 7. — כִּשְׁאָר גַּם־הוּא. The E. V., *he that remaineth*, is not warranted by grammar nor by the connection.

11 Ver. 7. — "Prince," literally, tribe-prince or head of a thousand, a Pentateuch word.

12 Ver. 8. — מִן, lit., *because of*, here is = *against*.

13 Ver. 8. — מִצָּבָה. The keri undoubtedly gives the true text, מִצָּבָא, nor is there any need of adopting the vowel changes proposed by Ortenberg and Ewald.

14 Ver. 8. — מֵעֹבֵר וּמִשָּׁב, the same phrase that occurs in vii. 14, where, however, the connection requires a variation in the rendering.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **The burden of the word.** The ancient interpretation of מַשָּׂא, = divine declaration, oracle, or vision (LXX., Vulgate), has been adopted by most modern interpreters (Cocceius, Vitringa, Gesenius, Ewald, Fürst); but the other, = minatory prophecy (Targum, Aquila, Peshito), has been accepted by Jerome, Luther, Calvin, Umbreit, Kliefoth, Pressel, and has especially been vindicated by Hengstenberg (*Christology*). *Burden* is the admitted meaning of the word in other connections; it is never joined with the name of God, or of any other person but the subject of the prophecy; and undeniably is in most instances prefixed to a threatening prediction. See Isaiah xxii. 1, xiv. 28, xv. 1, etc., and especially Jeremiah xxiii. 33 ff. The phrase, "burden *of the word of Jehovah*," is peculiar to the post-exile prophets (xii. 1, Mal. i. 1). **The land of Hadrach** is a very obscure *ἅπαξ λεγομενον*. Pressel recounts no less than seventeen different explanations of it. They may be thus classified: (1.) It is the name of an ancient city or land (Theodoret Mops., Michaelis, Rosenmüller, Pressel), but this has arisen from a confusion of the word with Edrei. (2.) An appellative noun denoting the South (Targum), or the surrounding region (Jun. and Tremellius), or the interior (Hitzig), or the depressed region = Cœle-Syria (Maurer). (3.) A corruption of the text is assumed, הדרך for חוֹרָךְ = Αὐρανῖτις (Ortenberg, Olshausen). (4.) The name of a Syrian king (Gesenius, Bleek, Vaihinger, Fürst). (5.) The name of a Syrian god (Movers, Van Alphen). (6.) It is a symbolical name, like Ariel (Is. xxix. 1), Rahab (Ps. lxxxvii. 4). This, the oldest interpretation (Jerome, Raschi, Kimchi), is sustained by the fact that the others are all purely conjectural. No such name as Hadrach is now or ever has been known. The translators of the LXX. and Vulgate were ignorant of it. All the other proper names in the passage are well understood; this one, the first, has resisted the efforts of the acutest scholars to give it any historical identification. We must, therefore, either say that it denotes a region now unknown, near Damascus, which is surely most unlikely in a country so long and thoroughly known as northern Syria; or else give it a figurative meaning. Assuming the latter, Hengstenberg, Kliefoth, Keil, after Calvin, explain it as a compound term denoting *strong-weak* or *harsh-gentle*,[1] which the prophet employs as a mystical designation of the Persian Empire, which for prudential reasons he was unwilling to specify more distinctly, the epithet meaning, that the land now strong and mighty shall hereafter be humbled and laid low. The subsequent statements are then only enlargements or specifications of the general visitation directed against the great empire under which the Jews were now in subjection. **Its resting-place.** This clause commences the detail of the several parts of the whole designated as Hadrach. The burden is to abide permanently upon Damascus. Its native rule, which ceased on the Great Conquest, was never afterwards recovered. **Has an eye, etc. Man**, here, as in Jer. xxxii. 20, signifies the rest of mankind as contrasted with Israel. The latter half of the verse gives the reason of the former, namely, that God's providence extends over the whole earth, and He therefore cannot allow the existing disproportion between his people and the heathen to continue permanently. Some (Kimchi, Calvin, Henderson) render "the eye of man," *gen. subj.*, as E. V., but this requires an unusual rendering of כִּי, and besides, does not suit the context.

Ver. 2. **And Hamath also.** Hamath, the Greek Epiphania on the Orontes, shall also be a resting-place of the burden. Nearly all expositors concur in construing the last two words as a relative clause. Hamath and Damascus are closely connected as together representing Syria. Contiguous in territory, they were alike in doom. From them the prophet turns to Phœnicia. **Tyre and Sidon is** = Tyre with Sidon, as the following verb in the singular shows. Tyre was a colony of Sidon, but the daughter soon outstripped the mother, and as early as Isaiah's time the elder city was viewed as an appendage of the younger. **Because it is.** There is no need of giving to the conjunction, the rare and doubtful meaning, *although* (Calvin; Henderson, E. V.), since its normal sense suits perfectly. Tyre was **very wise**, as the world counts wisdom, multiplying wealth and strength, and trusting in them; but this very pride of earthly wisdom brought the divine retribution (Ezek. xxviii. 2–6. Cf. 1 Cor. i. 19, 27).

Ver. 3. Describes the resources of the insular city. The **stronghold** doubtless refers to the immense double sea-wall which made the place apparently impregnable. For her vast accumulations of wealth, see Is. xxiii, Ezek. xxvii. חרוץ — *shining*, is simply a poetical name of gold.

Ver. 4. **Jehovah will seize.** An earthly conqueror may perform the work, but the ultimate agency is the Lord, who beholds and controls all things. **Her bulwark.** It is of little consequence whether חֵילָהּ be rendered *rampart*, or *might*, so long as *in* is not converted into *into*. The point of the clause is that the insular position, which apparently rendered the city invincible, should feel the weight of Jehovah's hand, and prove no protection. The prodigious power and wealth of the Tyrians, and their utter overthrow, are among the most familiar of historical truths.

Ver. 5. The prophet turns to Philistia. **Ashkelon sees**, etc. A vivid description of the effect of the fall of Tyre upon the cities on the coast

1 Pressel derides this view, saying, *Diese etymologischen Versuche sind in der That auch Beides, gar zu scharf und gar zu zart, gar zu stark und gar zu schwach.* But where all are groping in the dark, ridicule is scarcely in place.

southward (cf. Is. xxiii. 5). Only four of the Philistine capitals are mentioned, Gath being omitted, as in Amos, i. 6–8, Jer. xxv. 20, Zeph. ii. 4. The omission seems due to the fact that Gath, after being dismantled by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), sank into political insignificance. "Sees" is to be supplied after Gaza, and both "sees" and "fears" after **Ekron**. **The king**, in Hebrew, lacks the article, and the sense is not simply that the reigning king perishes, but that Gaza henceforth has no king. Of course, such monarchs as it had at this time, were only vassal kings. תֵּשֵׁב. Hengstenberg strenuously contends against the common passive rendering, but apparently without reason. He (with Ewald and Köhler) renders, it shall *sit* or *remain*, in opposition to passing on or passing away. But compare Isaiah xiii. 20, where the verb is used as exactly parallel with שָׁכַן. (J. A. Alexander *in loc.*)

Ver. 6. **And a mongrel dwells.** מַמְזֵר. A word of uncertain origin, which occurs in only one other place in Scripture, namely, Deut. xxiii. 3, where it means *bastard*. The rendering in the version is from Fürst (*Dictionary*), who deduces the verb from an assumed root, signifying to *mix the sexes*. It is used in the text to denote a person of blemished birth. **Ashdod** should lose its native population, and have their place supplied by a mongrel brood. **The pride of the Philistines**, *i. e.*, all that constitutes their pride. This clause resumes what precedes in relation to the several cities, and applies it to the nation as a whole. In the next verse a further advance is made, and the conversion of the people is set forth.

Ver. 7. **And I take . . . blood.** The singular suffixes refer to the ideal unity in which the Philistines are conceived of as a single person. See a similar case in ch. vii. 2, 3. The blood mentioned is that of sacrifices, which the heathen sometimes drank, and the **abominations** = not idols, as if he were going to hold on to them *mordicus* (Hengstenberg), but idolatrous offerings. The whole clause strikingly depicts the abolition of idolatry. The rest of the verse sets forth what comes in its place. **And even he**, *i. e.*, the nation of the Philistines regarded as a person. **To our God** = the God of Israel. They shall become his worshippers. **Like a prince**, a tribe prince. אַלֻּף is a denominative from אֶלֶף, and denotes the head of a thousand (cf. Micah, v. 2). In the earlier books it is applied only to the tribe-princes of Edom, but is transferred by Zechariah to the tribal heads of Judah. The remnant of the Philistines is to become like a *chiliarch* in Judah. The statement is completed by the final clause. **And Ekron.** This is mentioned not in and for itself, but simply to individualize the declaration; any other city would have answered as well. **Like the Jebusite**, *i. e.*, like the ancient inhabitants of Jebus, who became incorporated with the covenant people and shared all their privileges. See the case of Araunah, 2 Sam. xxiv. 18.

Ver. 8. Not only shall a judgment fall on the neighboring heathen and the remnant of them be converted, but the Lord will carefully protect his own people. **And I encamp for my house.** *House, dat. comm.*, stands for people or family of God (Hos. viii. 1). **An army** is more precisely defined in the next clause as passing through and returning, *i. e.*, marching to and fro. **No oppressor**, such as Egypt, Assyria, or Babylon. **For now I see** = am exercising my providential control. "In the estimation of men of little faith, God *sees* only when He is actually interfering" (Hengstenberg). But in fact He sees all the time.

"There can be no doubt that we have here as graphic an account of the expedition of Alexander the Great as is consistent with the permanent distinction between prophecy and history" (Hengstenberg). The capture of Damascus, of Tyre, and of Gaza, are well-known historical facts; and these carry with them assurance that there was also a fulfillment of the prediction in reference to Hamath and the other cities of Philistia, of the fate of which we have no express account. This fulfillment, however, was manifestly only incipient, inasmuch as the incorporation of the Philistines with Israel did not take place until a later period. On the other hand, the attempt of the so-called later criticism to refer the passage to the conquests of Uzziah mentioned in 2 Chron. xxvi. 6, 7, completely fails; because Uzziah did not attack Damascus and Hamath nor Tyre, which are here mentioned, while he did subdue other neighboring heathen, Edomites, Arabians, Maonites, who are not mentioned. The rapid celerity of these conquests is most appropriate to the agency of the "he-goat" whom Daniel saw (viii. 5) coming from the west "on the face of the whole earth, and he touched not the ground." All the great captains from Sesostris down yield to Alexander in the swiftness and extent of his conquests. Even Tyre, with all its immense advantages and resources, stayed his march for only what was comparatively a short period.

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL.

1. The word of the Lord endureth forever. Here is a prediction of a heavy calamity, which falls in succession upon Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, Zidon, and the sea-coast cities of Philistia; yet the people of God are safe, guarded not by any human power, but by the unseen presence of their God. Even so it came to pass. The Syrian conquests of Alexander the Great fulfilled the prophecy to the letter. After the battle of Issus, he captured Damascus, which Darius had chosen as the strong depository of his wealth, and this opened to him all Cœle-Syria. Zidon soon surrendered. Tyre, strong in its position, its defenses, its wealth, and its wisdom, made a stubborn resistance, yet after a seven months' siege was taken and "devoured by fire." Gaza, too, although it was, as its name imports, *the strong*, was conquered after five months' effort, and destroyed. The whole region fell a prey to the imperious conqueror, but the armies passed and repassed by Jerusalem without doing the least injury. Josephus accounts for this remarkable fact by the statement that when the conqueror drew near the city the high priest went forth to meet him, in his official robes, followed by a train of priests and citizens arrayed in white; and that Alexander was so impressed by the spectacle that he did reverence to the holy name on the high priest's mitre; and when Parmenio expressed surprise at the act, he answered that he had seen in a vision at Dium in Macedon, the god whom Jaddua represented, who encouraged him to cross over into Asia and promised him success. Afterwards he entered the city, offered sacrifice, and heard a recital of the prophecies of Daniel which foretold his victory, in consequence of which he bestowed im-

portant privileges upon the Jews. (See Hengstenberg, *Genuineness of Daniel*, 224–233; Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 60.) The truth of this narrative, although much questioned by Prideaux and others, has of late come to be considered extremely probable, on the ground of both its external evidence and its consistency with the character and policy of Alexander. But there is no doubt whatever of the main fact, that amid the storm of conquest which swept over the entire coterminous region, Jerusalem escaped unharmed. The holy city experienced what David said (Ps. xxxiv. 7), "The angel of the Lord *encampeth* around them that fear Him and delivereth them." This "captain of the Lord's host" (Josh. v. 15) kept at bay the otherwise irresistible foe.

2. Bloodshed and carnage prepare the way for the Prince of Peace. The conquest of Alexander had aims and results far beyond any contemplated by himself even in the most extensive of his far-reaching views. He tore down that others might build up. The humiliation of the Syrian powers and provinces was preliminary to their conversion to the true faith. Their cruel and debasing worship disappeared, and the remnant became incorporated with the Christian Church. They exhibited on a small scale what the entire career of Alexander exhibited on the world's broad stage, — a secular preparation for the new and final form of the kingdom of God on earth. Well says Wordsworth, "We speak of the connection of sacred and profane history; but what history can rightly be called profane? What history is there, rightly studied, which is not sacred? What history is there in which we may not trace the footsteps of Christ?" A heathen historian (Arrian) said that Alexander, who was like no other man, could not have been given to the world without the special design of Providence. But what to Arrian was an inference from a narrow induction is to us a broad fact stamped upon the face of the world's history, and confirmed by the concurrent testimonies of two divine seers, Daniel and Zechariah.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

WORDSWORTH: Ver. 1. Hadrach is the designation of the powers of this world generally (of which Persia was a specimen), strong for a while and proudly exulting in their strength, and opposing God and persecuting his Church, and in due time to be laid low and broken in pieces by Him. How many Hadrachs are now vaunting themselves as if they were all-powerful! how many are raging against Him, and how terrible will be their downfall!

MOORE: Never has sin more proudly entrenched herself than in godless but magnificent Tyre. Yet all was swept like chaff before the whirlwind of the wrath of God, when the time for the fulfillment of his threatenings had come. Two hundred years passed away after these threatenings were uttered, and Tyre seemed stronger than ever; yet when the day of doom dawned, the galleys that had left her the queen of seas, when they returned found her but a bare and blackened rock, a lonely monument of the truth that our God is a consuming fire. . . . God will not make Himself a liar to save man in his sins.

JAY: *Ekron as the Jebusite.* 1. It is a great thing to be a Jebusite. 2. Jebusites may be derived from Ekronites. Hence let none despair, either for themselves or for their fellows. God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

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2. ZION'S KING OF PEACE.

CHAPTER IX. 9, 10.

A. *The Character of the King* (ver. 9). B. *The Nature and Extent of his Kingdom* (ver. 10).

9 Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion,
Shout,[1] daughter of Jerusalem,
Behold, thy king cometh to[2] thee,
Just and saved is He,
Afflicted and riding upon an ass,
Even upon a colt, the she-asses'[3] foal,
10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim,
And the horse from Jerusalem,
And the battle-bow shall be cut off;
And he shall speak peace to the nations,
And his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
And from the river to the ends of the earth.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 9. — "Shout," E. V., is the exact rendering of הָרִיעִי, which means, to make a loud noise; whether of joy or sorrow depends upon the context.

2 Ver. 9. — לָךְ. Not only *to* thee, but *for* thee, for thy good. Cf. Is. ix. 5.

3 Ver. 9. — The E. V., *foal of an ass*, by making the last noun a singular instead of a plural, misses the emphasis laid upon the youth of the animal as one not yet old enough to go by itself.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

From the description of deliverance wrought and blessings conferred by means of destructive judgments upon the heathen, the Prophet turns abruptly to a royal personage who is to appear without armies or weapons, and yet will establish general peace and set up a kingdom of unlimited extent.

Ver. 9. **Rejoice.** The value of this blessing is expressed by a summons to joy in view of it. Cocceius justly says, that the summons itself contains a prophecy. **Daughter of Zion**, see on ii. 7–10. The Prophet says, **Behold!** as if he saw the animating spectacle, **thy king** — not any ruler, but *thine*, *i. e.*, the one long promised and expected (Pss. xlv., lxxxii.), he who alone is thy king, in the highest sense of the word.

This king is described by four features of character and condition: (1.) **Just.** The leading virtue in a king, and hence emphasized in the Messianic utterances (Is. xi. 3–5; Jer. xxiii. 5; Ps. xlv. 6, 7). (2.) **Saved.** נוֹשָׁע is rendered actively by all the ancient versions (Luther, Grotius, Marckius, Henderson); but the participle is *Niphal* which, although it may be reflexive, is never active save in verbs which have no *Kal* form. Calvin, Cocceius, and most of the moderns, give the passive rendering. A *tertium quid* has been sought by Hengstenberg, Keil, and others, in the sense *endued with salvation*, but for this I can see no authority in the passages quoted (Deut. xxxiii. 29; Ps. xxxiii. 16). Pressel follows Fürst in rendering *victorious*, which is arbitrary. Nor is there here an *exigentia loci*, as Henderson claims; for the king is saved not for his own sake only, but for his people's, and the blessing, therefore, is not a personal one, but extends to all his subjects. Thus the passive suits the connection. (3.) **Afflicted**, עָנִי. The root עָנָה = to be bowed down, in its primary sense of bowed by outward circumstances = afflicted, gives the adjective found here, but in the secondary sense of inwardly bowed, gives the adjective עָנָו = meek, patient, lowly. While there is a constant tendency of the two significations to pass into each other, yet the distinction is generally maintained, and עָנִי is found coupled with כְּאֵב, דַּל, אֶבְיוֹן. The E. V. is sustained by the LXX. (πραΰς), Targum, Kimchi, and most of the moderns, who cannot see the relevancy of this feature to the character of a triumphant king. But our king triumphs through suffering. His crown springs out of his cross. Hence we agree with the Vulgate (*pauper*), Aben Esra, Calvin, Cocceius, Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Keil, in considering this one word as summing up the elaborate picture of suffering contained in Is. liii. It is true, Matthew (xxi. 5) apparently sustains the other view, but he merely quotes the LXX as he found it, without endorsing its absolute accuracy in all particulars. Besides, he omits two of the traits mentioned, and dwells only on the last one, for the sake of which his quotation was manifestly made. (4.) **Riding upon an ass.** Lit., "upon an ass, even upon a young ass, a foal of she-asses." The וְ is epexegetical, just as it is in 1 Sam. xvii. 40, "in a shepherd's bag, *even* in a scrip." אֲתֹנוֹת is simply the plural of species. Gen. xxi. 7: "who would have said that Sarah should give *children* suck?" Yet Sarah had but one child. In this case the youthfulness of the animal is emphasized, since the expression implies that it was one not yet ridden, but still running behind the she-asses. But what does this trait mean? Many affirm that it points to the *peaceful* character of the king, as set forth in the next verse. But this does not account for the marked emphasis given to the youth of the animal. It is better therefore (Hengstenberg, Keil, etc.) to regard it as a token of poverty and meanness. The ass was indeed ridden by distinguished persons in the early days of Israel when horses were not used at all; but after the time of Solomon no instance occurs of its being employed on state occasions. That this king should ride not upon a horse but upon an ass, and that an untrained foal, indicated how far he should be from possessing any worldly splendor. The close correspondence between this account and our Lord's entry into Jerusalem is well known; and Matthew (xxi. 4) and John (xii. 15) speak of the latter as a fulfillment of the former. And while it is true, as Vitringa says, that the prophecy would have been fulfilled in Christ, even if He had not made his entry into Jerusalem in this manner; still it is apparent that our Lord designedly framed the correspondence which we observe, and that he intended thus to embody the thought which lies at the basis of the whole passage, namely, that the king Messiah would rise through lowliness and suffering, to might and glory, and would conquer the world not by arms but by suffering and dying.

Ver. 10. This verse describes the character and extent of the Messiah's kingdom. **And I will cut off**, etc. Not only will this king extend his reign by peaceful methods, but all the instruments of war will be effectually removed from his people. **The chariot, the horse, and the battle-bow** are merely specifications, standing for the whole class of offensive weapons, which are to be **cut off.** This last word is the one used above (ver. 6) in reference to the pride of the Philistines, and denotes extermination. Both passages rest upon Micah v. 10, 11. The Lord will take away all the outward defenses upon which a carnal reliance is placed. The occurrence of the word **Ephraim** here does not prove that this prophecy was written before the exile, but only that Zechariah uses the familiar designation of the different parts of the country which still survived after the separation of the two kingdoms had ceased. See mention of Israel in viii. 13, the *post exilium* origin of which is admitted by all. **Speak peace**, not that He will *teach* peace, nor *command* peace, nor speak *peacefully*, but that He will *speak* peace, and that effectually, accomplishing by a single word what worldly kings bring about only by force of arms (cf. Ps. lxxii. 6, 7; Micah v. 5). He will do so not merely to the covenant people, but **to the nations** at large. This point is farther expanded in the boundaries assigned to his sway. **From sea to sea**, etc. The expressions are borrowed from the statement of Israel's "bounds" in Ex. xxiii. 31, whence some (Eichhorn, Hitzig) have inferred that they mean simply the restoration of the earthly Israel to its widest geographical limits. But there are changes in the phraseology which compel a different view. Instead of saying, from one particular sea to another, Zechariah leaves out all qualifying epithets and even the articles, so that the first clause must mean, from any one sea to any other, even the most distant, or from any sea around to the same point again. The other clause

will mean, from the Euphrates, or from any other river as a *terminus a quo*, to the ends of the earth. נָהָר with the article always means the Euphrates, and probably does so here, but an equivalent sense may be gained by the alternative rendering given above. What is meant is that the kingdom should be strictly universal. Our passage is a reproduction of Ps. lxxii. 8.

The History of the Interpretation. The early Jewish authorities held that the Messiah is the subject. Thus the Book of Zohar, "On this account it is said of Messiah, Lowly and riding upon an ass." The same view is given by Joshua ben Levi, Saadias-Gaon, and others. The testimonies may be found in Wetstein on Matt. xxi. 4. Jarchi, known among the Jews as the prince of Commentators, declares that "it is impossible to interpret it of any other than the Messiah." In the twelfth century other opinions prevailed. One found in the Bab. Talmud evaded the difficulty by saying, "If the Israelites are worthy, the Messiah will come with the clouds of heaven (Dan. vii. 13); if they are unworthy, he will come poor and riding upon an ass (Zech. ix. 9)." Another resorted to the device of two Messiahs, one of whom should be suffering, and the other, triumphant. Yet manifestly it is one and the same person who is described by the Prophet as uniting in himself the extremes of majesty and humiliation, — a combination which on the New Testament view of the case is intelligible and self-consistent, but on any other quite impossible. Aben-Ezra refuted the opinion of Rabbi Moses, the priest who referred the prophecy to Nehemiah, but himself went as far astray by interpreting it of Judas Maccabæus. There were those, however, who adhered to the Messianic interpretation, and resorted to strange expedients to get rid of the implication of weakness and lowliness. One of these was the fable that the ass created at the end of the six days of creation was the same which Abraham saddled when he went to offer Isaac, and which Moses set his wife and sons upon when he came out of Egypt; and that this distinguished animal was to bear the Messiah. Another was that the ass of King Messiah should be of an hundred colors. The more intelligent expositors (Kimchi, Abarbanel, *et al.*) explained the reference to the ass as a sign of humility. It is supposed that this prophecy in some way gave rise to the foolish statement of Tacitus, that the Jews consecrated the image of an ass in the inmost shrine of their temple, and hence probably arose the calumny upon the early Christians, who were often confounded with the Jews, that they worshipped an ass's head, — a fable which Tertullian takes the trouble to confute (*Ad Nationes*, i. 11).

Among Christians the reference to Christ was uniform until the time of Grotius, who asserted that its first and literal application was to Zerubbabel, but that in a higher sense it referred to our Saviour. This view "excited universal displeasure, and called forth a host of replies, the first of which was written by Bochart." Such a view refutes itself. Later, the rationalists felt themselves pressed by the same difficulty as the Jews. They could easily account on natural principles for the anticipation of a Messiah in glory, but were quite unable in this way to explain the prophecy of a suffering Messiah. They therefore resorted to the Jewish evasions, and sought for somebody else than Christ as the subject. *Bauer* chose Simon Maccabæus; *Paulus*, John Hyrcanus; *Forberg*, King Uzziah. But the most (Eichhorn, Gesenius, Ewald, etc.) devised the theory of an ideal Messiah, maintaining that this and all other similar prophecies arose simply from the vague expectation that there would appear in the future some great deliverer springing from the Davidic line, who after enduring great personal trials would institute a righteous government, restore the nation to its old prosperity, and overcome its unjust oppressors. So that what the New Testament considers a distinct prediction of the Messiah is merely a patriotic dream. For a thorough refutation of this preposterous theory, see Hengstenberg's *Christology*, Appendix v. For a brief outline, see Theological and Moral, 3.

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL.

1. Here is an unequivocal prediction of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is so declared, as we have seen, by the New Testament. It is confirmed by a very peculiar proceeding on the part of our Lord, — his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, — which was simply exhibiting in symbol what is here expressed in words. It contains striking parallels with other passages unquestionably Messianic; such as the boundaries of the kingdom compared with Psalm lxxii. 8, and the destruction of foes compared with Micah v. 9. But the strongest evidence is found in the contents of the prophecy itself. It presents a person in whom the greatest grandeur, magnificence, power, and influence are associated, without confusion or contradiction, with the greatest humility, gentleness, poverty, suffering, and weakness. No judge, king, or ruler of any sort in all Jewish history ever united in his character or experience these two extremes. None was so lowly, none so exalted. None without arms *spoke* peace even to his own people, much less to the heathen, and least of all to the entire known world. It is true of only one being in all human history that he had not where to lay his head and rode upon an ass, and yet acquired a limitless dominion over land and sea.

2. What other kings accomplish by force, Zion's king effects without weapons or armies. Our Lord told Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world." Pilate in surprise said to Him, "Thou art a king then?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest [the truth], for I am a king. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth; every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (John xviii. 37). Truth, the revealed truth of God, is the only weapon this great conqueror employs, and yet with it He has built up the mightiest kingdom the earth has ever seen. It was an unconscious prophecy when the inscription over his cross, *This is the King of the Jews*, was recorded in three languages, indicating the comprehensive and far-reaching extent of the spiritual monarchy thus founded. Christ's followers in different ages have been slow to learn the lesson, and have often invoked the secular arm, but always to their own damage. They that take the sword shall perish by the sword. But the weapons which are not carnal are mighty through God. They have pulled down many a stronghold, have dismantled many an intellectual fortress, and time and again have brought the world's best thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

3. The "later criticism" altogether denies the existence of Messianic prophecies in the sense in which the historical Church has from the begin-

ning held that they were contained in the Scriptures. This school maintains that what is called the Messianic idea arises out of the dissatisfaction which men in every age have had with the existing condition of things. Deeming the continuance of this inconsistent with the benevolence of God, they instinctively longed and looked for a regeneration of humanity, when all things would be restored to the state originally designed by the Creator. Hence the classic expectation of a golden age. Moreover, every man is dissatisfied with his own moral condition as well as with that of the race. He is weak and imperfect. He does not live in harmony with what he knows to be true and right. Thence arises the ideal of a perfect man, of one whose whole mode of thought, feeling, and action is in accordance with the highest and purest truth. This is the idea of the Messiah of God. But as no such Messiah is to be found within or around us, it is natural to look for Him in the same future in which we expect the regeneration of society. And the more so as we know by observation how much the advancement of the race has depended upon the appearance from time to time of single persons distinguished by lofty endowments. Now this Messianic idea was developed in a very high degree among the Jews, because they had more of the general spirit of prophecy than other nations. The Hebrew Prophet was a man of genius, enthusiasm, and intense moral energy. His pure reason, illumined of God, enabled him to understand the character of the divine government and foresee events hidden from common eyes. His exalted imagination and sensitive conscience presented to him the visions of God. Thus he foresaw not only the general triumph of truth and the exaltation of Israel, but also the means by which these were to be obtained, namely, the Messiah, which term sometimes means a Jewish King, at others the Jewish people, and in a third class of instances, the better portion of that people. But these predictions were always in their nature subjective; their authors neither had nor thought they had any objective revelation made to them of actions or events in the life of any future historical person. They were great and excellent men, but not directly inspired nor infallible. And all their sayings can be easily explained by the actings of their own minds according to the time and the circumstances in which they were placed.

A detailed refutation of this ingenious argument would be beyond the limits of a Commentary. It is enough to say that the parallel instituted between Ethnic and Hebrew views on the subject does not hold. The former were mere scattered, vague, and individual suggestions respecting the future, and even these, there is good reason for supposing, were mere echoes of the voice of the Old Testament or traditions from the primeval revelation which filtered down through the ages. Among the Hebrews, on the contrary, the idea of the Messiah was the central thought of their Scriptures and the organizing basis of their national existence. The statement of it begins with the protevangelium in Genesis, and passes with a closer definition and a greater development through Noah, Abraham, Jacob. Moses, David, Solomon, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, and Zechariah, and at last terminates with Malachi, who closed the Hebrew Canon. What was at first a promise to the race, limits itself in succession to a nation, to a tribe, to a family. The person set forth is described in turn as a prophet, as a priest, as a king, or as a combination of any two, or of all three, of these characters; and sometimes as in a state of great humiliation and suffering, and again, as in a position of the greatest power and glory. And the writers all with one consent speak of the conception not as a suggestion of their own minds, but as a disclosure from without or rather from above. Their common formula is, Thus saith the Lord. And it is not possible to reconcile their honesty with the view that they were uttering merely subjective notions. Moreover, the origin and continuance of the nation are traced to the divine purpose of sending a Messiah. For this Abraham was called from Ur of the Chaldees, the line of his posterity carefully preserved, Israel kept in Egypt, afterwards put in possession of the promised land, the Mosaic economy instituted, priests and kings and prophets raised up, the nation long maintained, then exiled, and then restored. Their theocratic constitution was not owing to a blind and odious particularism, but was the result of God's wisdom in choosing one race to be the depository of the truth and blessing destined one day to be coextensive with the race. The Jews were trustees for the whole human family. It pleased God to make a gradual and thorough preparation through a long tract of ages for the full and final revelation of his grace. The seed of Abraham was simply the means by which this preparation was accomplished. On this view of their history, all its parts and features are easily understood, and are seen to constitute merely successive stages in the development of God's purpose to bring many sons unto glory through a captain of salvation. On any other view it is a mystery which baffles all thought and comprehension. But what was a mystery before the coming of Christ is an "open secret" under the Gospel, and the key which fits all the wards of the lock must be the right one. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The remarkable correspondence between his life, words, and works, and the hints and promises and types and predictions of the Old Testament, indicate beyond question to any unprejudiced person, a presiding mind which coördinated the two Testaments, and brought about that wondrous harmony of theme and tone which is wholly unexampled in all human literature. And this Messiah objectively revealed is not only the link between the Hebrew Scriptures and the Greek, but the one great thought which gives purpose, symmetry, and consistency to the entire scheme of the Old Testament.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

MOORE: Ver. 9. Christians should be happy. No people have a better right or a better reason to rejoice. A suffering people can find great comfort in the fact that they have a suffering Saviour (Heb. iv. 15).—Ver. 10. War will cease on the earth only when wickedness ceases, and wickedness will cease only when Christ's universal empire begins.

WORDSWORTH: It is remarkable that St. John's narrative of the triumphal entry of Christ, riding into Jerusalem on the foal of an ass, is immediately followed by the mention of an incident in the history: "Certain Greeks wished to see Jesus." The entry itself was like a vision of the coming of the Gentile world to Jesus; these Greeks were its first fruits.

JNO. NEWTON: Messiah is king of Zion. Happy the subjects who dwell under his shadow. He rules them not with the rod of iron by which

He bruises and breaks the power of his enemies, but with his golden sceptre of love. He reigns by his own right, and by their full and free consent, in their hearts. He reigns upon a throne of grace to which they at all times have access, and from whence they receive the pardon of all their sins, grace to help in time of need, and a renewed supply answerable to all their wants, cares, services, and conflicts.

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3. VICTORY OVER THE SONS OF JAVAN.

Chapter IX. 11–17.

A. *Deliverance promised* (vers. 11, 12). B. *Name of the Foe* (ver. 13). C. *Jehovah fights for his People* (vers. 14, 15). D. *Salvation* (ver. 16). E. *General Prosperity* (ver. 17).

11 As for thee also, — for the sake of thy covenant-blood,[1]
I send forth[2] thy prisoners from the pit wherein is no water.
12 Return to the strong hold,[3] O prisoners of hope,
Even to-day I declare, I will repay double[4] to you.
13 For[5] I bend for me Judah, fill the bow[6] with Ephraim,
And stir up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Javan,
And make thee like the sword of a hero.
14 And Jehovah shall appear above them,
And like lightning shall his arrow go forth,
And the Lord Jehovah shall blow the trumpet
And go forth in the storms of the South.
15 Jehovah of Hosts shall protect[7] them,
And they devour, and tread down sling-stones,[8]
And they drink and make a noise as from[9] wine,
And become full as the sacrificial bowl,[10] as the corners of the altar,
16 And Jehovah their God saves them in that day,
(Saves) like a flock[11] his people,
For jewels of a crown shall they be,
Sparkling over his land,
17 For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty!
Corn makes the young men thrive,[12] and new wine the maidens.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 11. — בְּדַם, being in thy covenant-blood = being sprinkled with it. The covenant of Jehovah with his people was sealed with sprinkled blood. Ex. xxiv. 8. The compound term *covenant-blood* best represents the form and force of the original phrase.

2 Ver. 11. — שִׁלַּחְתִּי is the common prophetic preterite.

3 Ver. 12. — בִּצָּרוֹן, a *cut off* place, h. inaccessible, fortified, ὀχύρωμα (LXX.), *munitio* (Vulg.).

4 Ver. 12. — מִשְׁנֶה. Pressel seems to be alone in giving to this word the sense, *the second place*. The rendering of the E. V. is sustained both by usage and the connection.

5 Ver 13. — The E. V. needlessly continues here the sentence of the previous verse, and renders כִּי when. A literal rendering is at once more forcible and more accurate.

6 Ver. 13. — קֶשֶׁת. Some connect this with what precedes, but nothing is gained by departing from the Masoretic interpunction.

7 Ver. 15. — יָגֵן = covers protectingly. Cf. xii. 8.

8 Ver. 15. — "*With* sling-stones," in the text of E. V., introduces a needless preposition. The marginal rendering is to be preferred.

9 Ver. 15. — כְּמוֹ־יָיִן is an abbreviated comparison. Cf. x. 7.

10 Ver. 15. — "Sacrificial bowl." The qualifying epithet must be introduced in order to give the full force of מִזְרָק. Cf. xiv. 20.

11 Ver. 16. — The E. V. "flock *of* his people," is grammatically impossible.

12 Ver. 17. — יְנוֹבֵב. The first marginal rendering of the E. V., *make grow*, is better than its text, *make cheerful*. The word is derived from the sprouting of plants, and evidently refers to a prolific increase. Fürst gives *to make eloquent*, which is conjectural and inept.

CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL.

A new scene opens. The prophet turns away from the beautiful picture of a peaceful king extending his beneficent sway over all the earth, to describe a period of distress and weakness, to which, however, he gives a promise of full deliverance, to be gained by actual conflict. This warlike period evidently belongs to a nearer future than the one just described, and the prevalent opinion justly refers it to the Maccabean age. The passage begins with a general assurance of deliverance (vers. 11, 12); the foe is mentioned by name (ver. 13); the Lord fights for his chosen (vers. 14, 15); the result is salvation (ver. 16); this is followed by general prosperity (ver. 17).

Vers. 11, 12 contain a promise of deliverance. **As for thee also.** The person addressed is the whole nation, as is apparent from the mention of Ephraim and Jerusalem in ver. 10, and of Zion in ver. 13, and also from the phrase "blood of the covenant," which belonged to the twelve tribes; see Ex. xxiv. 8. גַּם־אַתְּ, *even thou*, stands absolutely at the head of the sentence for the sake of emphasis (cf. Gen. xlix. 8), and the sense is, Even though you are in such a forlorn condition, seemingly lost, yet I have mercy in store for you. The ground of this promise is stated before the promise itself, in the peculiar Mosaic expression **covenant blood**, the force of which is well expressed by Hengstenberg. "The covenant-blood, which still separates the Church from the world, was a sure pledge to the covenant nation of deliverance out of all trouble, provided, that is, that the nation did not make the promises of God nugatory by wickedly violating the conditions He had imposed." **Thy prisoners** resumes and explains the **thou** at the opening of the verse. It does not mean "such of the Jews as were still captives in foreign lands" (Henderson, Köhler), but the entire people. The **pit without water**, an allusion to the history of Joseph (Gen. xxxvii. 24), denotes not so much a condition of captivity as of general distress. The escape from this condition to one of security and prosperity is predicted under the form of a command, **Return to the strong hold.** See the same figure in Ps. xl. 2, where the *rock* and the *pit* are put in sharp contrast. Since the people had this prospect, they were justly entitled **prisoners of hope**, a beautiful expression which explains itself. **Even to-day**, *i. e.*, in spite of all threatening circumstances (Ewald, Hengstenberg). **Repay double**, namely, double the prosperity you formerly enjoyed. Cf. Is. xl. 2, xli. 7.

Ver. 13. The prophet proceeds to show more particularly how the deliverance just promised is to be effected. It is to be by a glorious victory over their oppressors. The method of this victory is represented by a bold and beautiful figure. Judah is the extended bow; Ephraim the arrow which the Lord shoots at the foe. Israel therefore is to carry on the conflict, and Jehovah to give them success. **For I bend for me Judah**, *i. e.*, as a bow. The word rendered *bend*, literally means *tread*; because a bow was often stretched by setting the foot upon it, this term came into use. **Fill the bow.** As only one arrow can be shot at a time from a bow, it is full when this is placed upon it. The complete sense of both clauses is, Judah and Ephraim are bow and arrow in the hand of Jehovah. **I stir up**, not *brandish as a lance* (Hitzig, Köhler), which would require the object to be expressed. **Javan**, the name of the fourth son of Japhet (Gen. x. 2), is the Hebrew word for Greece, usually identified with Ion or Ionia. Some suppose the persons meant by the sons of Zion are the Hebrews held as slaves in Greece (Ewald, Hitzig), who are now incited to insurrection. It is enough to say in reply that the contest here spoken of is manifestly carried on in the Lord's own land. A comparison with Dan. viii. 21 shows that we must regard Greece here as a formidable secular power, the Græco-Macedonian monarchy, especially in its successor in Syria, the Seleucidæ. To refer the passage to the days of Uzziah on account of the mention of Greece in Joel iv. 6 (cf. Amos i. 6, 9), is wholly unreasonable; since that passage does not allude to any conflict with the Greeks, but simply speaks of them as the parties to whom the Tyrians had sold certain Jewish captives. And it is the Tyrians, not the Greeks, who are there censured.

Ver. 14. **Will appear above them**, because He fights from heaven on their behalf. The remainder of the verse is a poetical description of a battle in the imagery of a tempest. The lightnings are Jehovah's arrows, the thunderblast is the signal of his trumpet, and He Himself marches in a furious storm sweeping up from the great southern desert. **Storms of the South** (cf. Is. xxi. 1; Hos. xiii. 15) were always the most violent.

Ver. 15. **Jehovah shall protect**, etc. The Lord not only fights for his people, but is also their shield, covering their heads in the day of battle. **And they devour**, etc. The image is that of a lion who eats the flesh and drinks the blood of his victim. Cf. Num. xxiii. 24. The figure is vigorous, but need not be called "a heathenish abomination" (Pressel). **Tread down sling stones** = subdue the enemy, contemptuously styled sling-stones or mere pebbles from the brook. *Flesh* is to be supplied as the object of **devour**, and *blood* as that of **drink**. The vessel mentioned in the last clause denotes, not any bowl, but one in which the priests catch the blood of a sacrifice. **Corners**, of course, include the horns which stood upon them. These figures are priestly, and intimate a holy war and victory.

Ver. 16 gives the result of this victory, — salvation. By an exquisite change of figure this is represented as bestowed upon them in the character of the Lord's **flock**, which at once suggests the peaceful blessings recounted in the 23d Psalm. In the next clause, with a designed antithesis to the sling stones in the previous verse, the prophet compares Zion's sons to **jewels of a crown**, which **sparkle over his land**, *i. e.*, Jehovah's. Hengstenberg takes the participle here in the same way as in Ps. lx. 6 = rising up. But, as Keil says, crown stones do not lift themselves up. It is better to take the word in the sense of *shining*, *glittering* (Ewald, Maurer, Köhler, Fürst). The reference is to precious gems set in a crown and flashing from the brow of a conqueror as he stalks over the land.

Ver. 17. **For how great**, etc. The passage closes with an exulting exclamation. The pronouns in the first clause refer to Jehovah (Hengstenberg, Ewald, Pressel), but mean the goodness and the beauty which He bestows (Henderson). This avoids the difficulty of ascribing beauty to the Lord,[1] and

1 "The beauty of the Lord," in Ps. xc. 17, represents a different word (נֹעַם), which, however, is best explained thus: May the loveliness of Jehovah — all that renders Him an object of affection and desire — be made known to us in our experience. Cf. Ps. xxvii. 4.

yet retains the full force of the apostrophe. **Corn and new wine** are the customary expressions of abundance (Deut. xxxiii. 28; Ps. iv. 8), and are here rhetorically divided between the youths and the maidens. Copious supplies of food lead to a rapid increase of population. Ps. lxxii. 16. "The drinking of *must* by young females is peculiar to this passage; but its being here expressly sanctioned by divine authority, furnishes an unanswerable argument against those who would interdict all use of the fruit of the vine" (Henderson). "We know that when there is but a small supply of wine, it ought by right of age to be reserved for the old, but when wine so overflows that young men and young women may freely drink of it, it is a proof of great abundance" (Calvin).

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. Few words are so precious to a devout believer as *covenant*. It suggests thoughts of grace, privilege, and security which are not easily attained in any other way. Our trust for this world and the next rests not upon voices of nature or conclusions of reason, but upon the promise of God, —a promise which He has chosen to present in the form of a compact with stipulations (and sometimes even when the stipulations were all on one side, Gen. ix. 9), and not only so, but to confirm it by sacrifice. This was vividly set before Israel when the law was given on Sinai. Moses sprinkled the blood of the offerings both upon the altar and upon the people, saying, "Behold the blood of the covenant which Jehovah has made with you concerning all these words." Now it is true that the Mosaic dispensation was a national compact with the Hebrew people, and that it also contained a complete and absolute rule of human duty, but besides these aspects it was a covenant of grace, representing the merciful provision God had made for the salvation of his people, and in this sense its relation to the Gospel economy was that of sunrise to the blaze of noon. It confirmed the promise made to Abraham, and rendered the believer's hope still more firm and clear, as resting upon an immutable bond. The force of that bond continued unimpaired down through the generations. "The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers [only], but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day" (Deut. v. 3). Again and again, in times of emergency or doubt, did the Old Testament saints reassure their souls and reanimate their hopes by recurring to that old covenant, "the word which He commanded for a thousand generations" (Ps. cv. 8). They might be involved in gloom and perplexity, and the eye of sense could see no way out; but they knew that God had made with them a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and this was all their salvation, and all their desire. The same blessed assurance continues to believers under the Gospel. Nay, it is stronger now, for we have the blood of a new covenant (Mark xiv. 24), *i. e.*, of a new administration of the old covenant, to confirm our faith. The *covenant blood*, on which the faith of Christians lays hold, is not that of bulls and goats, but of a lamb without spot, not the crimson stream of a typical sacrifice, but that which poured from the gaping wounds of the incarnate Son of God. The compact which has been ratified by such an oblation as was made at Golgotha, is necessarily imperishable. It can never fail. The blood of the cross is the blood of an everlasting covenant (Heb. xiii. 20). Here the devout soul rests in peace and security. The malice of the world, the roar of Satan, the clamor of conscience, all are still before the thought of the pledged and ratified word of Jehovah. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of our God abideth forever. The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for He is not a man that He should repent.

2. This portion of the chapter presents a remarkable contrast to the two verses which precede it. There we read of an eminently peaceful king under whom all weapons of war are destroyed. Without noise or conflict he quietly extends his dominion till it becomes universal. Here, on the contrary, Judah is the Lord's bow and Ephraim his arrow, and there is a terrible struggle set forth by images taken from the storm, the lightning, and the whirlwind. The language is not an exaggeration of what occurred in the heroic struggle for Judæan independence under the sons of the aged priest Mattathias. That struggle was essentially a religious one. It began in a determined resistance to the attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes to exterminate the faith of the Jews and impose the impure and idolatrous worship of the Greeks; and although other elements were developed in the course of time, this always was the chief consideration. During the course of it, the "good report through faith" of which the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks (xi. 36–39), was obtained by many who "were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection. Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were slain with the sword." The atrocities of heathen persecution roused a flame which was irresistible. Neither Antiochus nor any of his successors on the Syrian throne was able to subdue the zeal of the Jews for their ancestral faith. Again and again the armies of the alien were put to rout in pitched battles, and veterans of many a well-fought field were no match for men who fought for God as well as their native land. The Maccabees really earned the name (*Maccabæus* = hammerer) by which they are now generally known, and although disregarded by the haughty heathen, still they shine as jewels of a crown among all disinterested observers. "None have surpassed them in accomplishing a great end with inadequate means; none ever united more generous valor with a better cause" (Milman). They began with a few personal followers, and they ended with a strong and well-organized nation. The struggle lasted for a quarter of a century (B. C. 168-143), and notwithstanding the unequal resources of the parties, Jehovah of Hosts made feeble Jews like the sword of a hero, while the mailed warriors of Syria were trodden down like the small stones of a sling.

3. For more than one half of the four centuries which elapsed between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New, the history of the Jews is almost a total blank, and of the other half there is much less information to be drawn from Ethnic sources than might have been anticipated. But it is very apparent from many scattered indications that Israel had often occasion to say, How great is his goodness and how great his beauty! The population multiplied with a rapidity like that of their forefathers in Egypt. The few feeble struggling colonists gradually emerged into a strong, energetic, and well-organized commonwealth. Their land resumed its ancient fertility. Just as in the palmy days of old, its rocks were

crowned with mould and its sands covered with verdure, and a wide-spread commerce on both seas furnished the conditions of growing wealth. At the same time a spirit of enterprise, or a love of adventure, led many to distribute themselves all over the Roman world, so that there was scarcely a province either in the east or the west, where they were not found in numbers. Still in every quarter, under every form of government, and in the midst of every social system, they retained their national faith and usages with unconquerable tenacity. This was manifested not only by a persistent refusal to amalgamate with the various peoples among whom they lived, but by their regular and liberal contributions to the temple. A curious illustration of the latter is seen in the fact mentioned by Cicero, that Flaccus was compelled to forbid such offerings from the province of Asia, because the enormous export of gold affected the markets of the world. Thus even the emigrating Jews contributed to the prosperity of those who remained at home. It is evident then that the statements of increase contained in this chapter and the one that follows were verified to the letter. Parts of the land were as thickly settled as any portions of modern Europe. And notwithstanding all the outward conflicts in which they were engaged, or the suffering they may have experienced from the contentions of rival kingdoms around, "corn made the young men thrive, and new wine the maidens," and the covenant people were preserved in their integrity and distinctness, until He came, for whose appearing they had been appointed and preserved for more than twenty centuries.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

MOORE: Ver. 11. The covenant love of God and his faithful promises that are sealed with blood are the hope of the Church in time of trouble. — Ver. 12. Let sinners who are also prisoners of hope, turn to the stronghold Christ, ere it be forever too late, and God will give them a double blessing.

PRESSEL: Vers. 11, 12. How wide is the range of God's covenant with man! It extends so far that it forms, as our Lord said to the Sadducees, the immovable basis of our hope of eternal life. But if the salvation of this covenant, whether in its older or newer form, is ever to become ours, the first condition and the last is — *Turn to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.* Again: (1) There is no imprisonment without hope, for the covenant-blood speaks louder than our sins, and the Lord can break every fetter; but (2) There is no hope without conversion, for without conversion we are still in the pit without water, and fall short of the strong-hold which alone secures return to fellowship with God.

COWLES: Ver. 12. It is altogether the way of the Lord to send grief and affliction only in single measure, but joy and blessing in double, weighing out the retributions of justice carefully, and the inflictions of his rod very tenderly; but pouring forth the bounties of his mercy as if He could not think of measuring them by any rule less than the impulses of infinite love!

WORDSWORTH. [This learned man spiritualizes the entire passage, but is not quoted here, because, as Hengstenberg says, "While the outward conflict was undoubtedly the prelude of a still grander conflict between Israel and Greece, to be fought with spiritual weapons, it is opposed to all the principles of sound interpretation to refer the words immediately to the latter."]

JAY: Ver. 16. Here we see the dignity of the Lord's people. They are "stones," precious stones, set in the "crown" of the King of kings. Here is also their exhibition; these stones of a crown are "lifted up." They are not to be concealed. Here is also their utility; these stones are to be lifted up "as an ensign upon the land." An oriflamme suspended over the royal tent; designed to attract followers to the cause in which he is engaged.

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4. FURTHER BLESSINGS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

CHAPTER X.

A. *God sends Blessing, but the Idols Sorrow* (vers. 1, 2). B. *Blessings upon native Rulers* (vers. 3–5). C. *Former Mercies restored to Judah and Ephraim* (vers. 6–9). D. *Messianic Mercies* (vers. 10–12).

1 Ask of Jehovah rain in the time of the latter rain;
Jehovah creates lightnings,
And showers of rain [1] will He give them,
To every one grass in the field.
2 For the teraphim [2] have spoken vanity,
And the diviners have seen a lie,
And speak dreams of deceit,
They comfort in vain;
Therefore they have wandered [3] like a flock,
They are oppressed [4] because there is no shepherd.
3 Against the shepherds my anger is kindled,
And the he-goats will I punish; [5]
For Jehovah of Hosts visits his flock, the house of Judah,

And makes them like his goodly horse in war.
4 From him the corner-stone, from him the nail,
From him the war-bow, from him will every ruler[6] come forth together.
5 And they shall be like heroes treading down [*i. e.*, foes]
Into the mire of the streets in the battle;
And they fight, for Jehovah is with them,
And the riders on horses are put to shame.[7]
6 And I will strengthen the house of Judah,
And the house of Joseph will save,
And will make them dwell,[8] because I pity them,
And they shall be as if I had not cast them off,
For I am Jehovah their God, and will hear them.
7 And Ephraim[9] shall become like a hero,
And their heart shall rejoice as with wine,
And their sons shall see and rejoice,
Their heart shall exult in Jehovah.
8 I will hiss to them and gather them,
For I have redeemed them,
And they shall increase as they did increase [before]
9 And I will sow[10] them among the peoples[11]
And in far countries they shall remember me,
And with their children they shall live and return.
10 And I will bring them back from the land of Egypt,
And from Assyria will I gather them,
And to the land of Gilead and Lebanon will I bring them,
And room shall not be found for them.[12]
11 And He passes through the sea, the affliction,[13]
And He smites the waves in the sea,
And all the depths of the Nile are put to shame;
And the pride of Assyria is brought down,
And the sceptre of Egypt shall depart.
12 And I will strengthen them in Jehovah,
And in his name shall they walk,[14] saith Jehovah.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — מְטַר־גֶּשֶׁם lit., rain of rain = copious rains. See Job xxxvii. 6, where the words are transposed. — The text of the E. V. gives a singularly inappropriate rendering of the previous noun חֲזִיזִים, for what consistency is there between "bright clouds" and heavy showers?

2 Ver 2. — תְּרָפִים. As this word denotes a peculiar species of idolatrous image, it is best to transfer it.

3 Ver. 2. — נָסְעוּ, lit., *break up*, as an encampment, h. to wander. *They*, *i. e.*, the people.

4 Ver. 2. — יַעֲנוּ *oppressed*, *sorely afflicted*. The *troubled* of the E. V. is too feeble. The tense is future, implying that the condition still exists.

5 Ver. 3. — There is a play here upon the two meanings of the word פָּקַד, the one to *care for*, the other to *punish*; or in general to *visit*, for good or for ill. Jehovah visits for evil, *i. e.*, punishes, the goats; but visits for good, *i. e.*, cares for, his flock. Keil, Henderson, and Cowles err in saying that the meaning *to punish* requires to be followed by עַל *pers.* See Job xxxi. 14; Is. xxvi 14. Henderson (following the E. V.) makes the extraordinary mistake of rendering אֶפְקוֹד as a preterite, and claiming the vav before עַל as a vav convers. He also renders כִּי = *nevertheless*, a meaning which it never has.

6 Ver. 4. — נוֹגֵשׂ = *ruler*, as in Is. iii. 12, ix. 17. Hengstenberg insists upon the original meaning, *oppressor*, but thinks the harshness implied is directed against foes.

7 Ver. 5. — הֹבִישׁוּ. The Hiphil takes a passive sense, just as in ix. 5.

8 Ver. 6. — הוֹשְׁבוֹתִים. This anomalous form is best explained as the Hiphil of יָשַׁב for הוֹשַׁבְתִּים. (Gesenius, Hengstenberg, Maurer). Ewald derives it from שׁוּב, and Kimchi explains it as a compound of both words uniting the senses of both, as in the E. V., "I will bring them again to place them." But it is far better to interpret it like the similar form in Ezek. xxxvi. 11, than to adopt this Rabbinical refinement, which has no precedent elsewhere.

9 Ver. 7. — וְהָיוּ. As Ephraim is a collective noun, there seems to be no reason for the periphrasis of the E. V., "*they of* Ephraim."

10 Ver. 9. — Henderson's rendering, "Though I have scattered them, ... yet they shall," etc., is grammatically

impossible, is opposed to the true sense of זָרַע, and is not required by the context. His "distant regions" is no improvement upon the E. V.'s "far countries."

11 Ver. 9. — עַמִּים. Peoples. See on viii. 20.

12 Ver. 10. — לֹא יִמָּצֵא. Cf. Josh. xvii. 16. (The necessary room) shall not be found for them.

13 Ver. 11. — צָרָה is best taken as in apposition to the preceding noun. To make it a verb meaning to *cleave*, after an Aramaic analogy (Maurer, Henderson, *et al.*), is far-fetched and needless. As a noun, it serves to show that the previous noun does not mean a literal sea, but affliction represented under that figure.

14 Ver. 12. — יִתְהַלָּכוּ. The force of the Hithpael conjugation here is to express more distinctly than the Kal, the idea of continuous habitual action. For the sentiment, cf. Micah iv. 5, where, however, Kal forms are used.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This chapter does not commence a fresh train of thought, but is rather an expansion of the foregoing prophecy. First, there is a promise of rain and fruitful seasons (ver. 1); a reference to idolatry as cause of their afflictions (vers. 2, 3 a); deliverance by God's blessing upon native rulers (vers. 3 b, 4, 5); restoration of ancient mercies (ver. 6); special mention of Ephraim as participating in the growth and enlargement promised to the whole people (vers. 7–9); farther promises to the nation couched in historic allusions to their former experience, and fulfilled only in the Messiah's kingdom (vers. 10–12). Some maintain that ver. 1 belongs to the preceding chapter, and ought not to have been separated from it (Hengstenberg), while others affirm the same of ver. 2 also (Hofmann, Köhler); but ver. 2 is plainly as closely connected with ver. 3 as it is with ver. 1. The question is of no importance to the interpretation.

Ver. 1. **Ask of Jehovah.** This summons to prayer is not a mere expression of God's readiness to give (Hengstenberg), but, both from the force of the words and the connection, is to be literally understood. Rain stands as a representative for all blessings, temporal and spiritual. **In the time of the latter rain,** is merely a rhetorical amplification, for it cannot be shown that the latter rain was more necessary than the early rain for maturing the harvest. Cf. Deut. xi. 13–15, from which the expressions here are taken. **Lightnings** are mentioned as precursors of rain. Cf. Jer. x. 13; Ps. cxxxv. 7, where, however, a different word (בְּרָקִים) is used. **Give them,** *i. e.*, every one who asks.

Ver. 2. The call to prayer is sustained by a reference to the misery caused by their former dependence upon idols and soothsayers. **Teraphim,** a kind of household gods = Penates, who appear also to have been looked upon as oracles (Hos. iii. 4), in which latter light they are regarded here. The etymology of the word is still unsettled. The prevalence of impostors, of the kinds here mentioned, just before the overthrow of Judah, is abundantly established. Jer. xxvii. 9; xxix. 8; xxiii. 9, 14, 32; Ezek. xxi. 34, xxii. 28. **Therefore,** the consequence was that they were compelled to **wander away,** and were without **a ruler,** *i. e.*, one of their own Davidic line, — a state of things still in existence when Zechariah wrote.

Ver. 3. **Against the shepherds.** Israel having lost its native rulers, fell under the power of heathen governors, here styled shepherds and **he-goats,** (Is. xiv. 9, *Heb.*). These are to be punished, because Jehovah regards those whom they oppress as **his flock,** whom He visits and protects. **House of Judah** is mentioned not in distinction from Ephraim (see vers. 6, 7), but as the central point and representative of the covenant people. A striking comparison indicates that the deliverance is effected by an actual military struggle. Just as in ch. ix. 13, Jehovah called Judah and Ephraim his bow and arrow, so here He calls the former his **goodly horse,** such a horse as for his extraordinary qualities is chosen, and splendidly equipped as the war-horse of the general. The House of Judah, therefore will be well prepared to meet its enemies.

Ver. 4. **From him the corner-stone.** מִמֶּנּוּ refers not to Jehovah (Hitzig, Köhler, Pressel), but to Judah, as appears from the connection and from the passage in Jer. (xxx. 21) on which this one leans. From themselves was to come forth every one of their rulers, which is expressed in the former part of the verse by figures, namely, the **corner-stone,** cf. Ps. cxviii. 22; **the nail,** the large ornamental pin, built into the wall of oriental houses for the purpose of suspending household utensils (Is. xxii. 23); **the war-bow,** which denotes military forces and weapons in general (ix. 10).

Ver. 5. The consequence will be the annihilation of foes. **And . . . . like heroes.** Some explain the allusion as = they trample the mire of the streets, *i. e.*, their foes considered as such (like the sling-stones in ix. 15); so Hengstenberg, Keil, etc. But the verb in Kal is always elsewhere transitive, and the בְּ ought not to be overlooked. We should render, therefore, **treading down** (foes) in or **into the mire** (Fürst, Köhler). **Riders on horses.** Cavalry, the arm in which Israel was always weak, is mentioned in Dan. xi. 40 as the principal strength of the Asiatic rulers (comp. also 1 Macc. iii. 39, iv. 1). Hence the force of the promise here.

Ver. 6. **And I will strengthen,** etc. **Judah** and **Joseph** comprehend the entire people as a whole. **Make them dwell,** *i. e.*, securely and happily as in the olden time, which is suggested also in the next clause but one (cf. Ezek. xxxvi. 11). **And I will hear them,** is a very comprehensive promise.

Ver. 7. **And Ephraim . . . . wine.** In this verse and the following, the prophet refers particularly to Ephraim (but not to the exclusion of Judah), for the reason that heretofore the ten tribes had not participated as largely as it was intended they should, in the return from exile. They and their sons shall share in the coming conflict, and equally with Judah prove themselves to be **like a hero.** Their exultation in Jehovah is expressed by a comparison which is applied by the Psalmist to the Lord Himself. Ps. lxxviii. 65.

Ver. 8. **I will hiss . . . . increase.** The hissing or whistling is mentioned as a signal (cf. Is. v. 26, vii. 18). It alludes to the ancient method of swarming bees. This verse explains how Israel, so large a part of whom were still in exile, should take part in the victorious struggle. The Lord

would bring them back. The utter downfall of the northern kingdom, so long before that of Judah, had removed nearly every political reason for maintaining the old disruption, and all the circumstances of the time inclined the various tribes to coalesce again into one people. **I have redeemed,** *pret. proph.* to express Jehovah's unalterable purpose. The last clause, like ver. 6 b, refers to Ezek. xxxvi. 11. The extraordinary multiplication of the Jews at and after this period is one of the most familiar facts of history. See Merivale, *History of the Romans*, ch. xxix. "Josephus informs us that two hundred years after the time here referred to, Galilee was peopled to an amazing extent, studded with cities, towns, and villages; and adds that the villages were not what are usually called by that name, but contained, some of them, fifteen thousand inhabitants." Henderson, *in loc.*

Ver. 9. **And I will sow . . . . . return.** The word זָרַע never means *scatter* in the sense of banishing or destroying (Fürst, Henderson, Hitzig), but always has the sense of *sowing* (σπερῶ, LXX.; *seminabo,* Vulg.), and when applied to men, denotes increase (Hos. ii. 24; Jer. xxxi. 27). The passage means, then, that Israel while among the nations will repeat the experience of their ancestors in Egypt, "the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew" (Ex. i. 12). **They shall live,** is explained in Ezek. xxxvii. 14. The mention of the **children** with them implies that the blessing would not be transient, but abiding.

Ver. 10. **And I will bring . . . Egypt.** Some expositors suppose that by Egypt and **Assyria** are meant the lands so named, and vainly attempt to show that many of the ten tribes were carried or escaped to Egypt. It is far better to adopt the opinion of Gesenius, that "Egypt and Assyria are mentioned here in place of the different countries into which the Jews were scattered." Such a typical use of names is neither unnatural nor unusual. Egypt was the first oppressor of the covenant people, and Assyria was the final instrument of overthrowing the ten tribes, and the two terms might well be combined as a general statement of the lands of the dispersion. See this combination in a similar case in Is. xxvii. 13, and cf. Is. x. 24, xi. 11, 16, xix. 23, lii. 4; Hos. xi. 11. Köhler's objection that in this case Assyria must be taken in its most literal sense, is surely groundless, for the prophet could not have meant that the Ephraimites should be restored from certain regions and not from others. The general terms of the preceding verses forbid such a narrow view. Nor can Pressel claim the mention of *Assyria* as favoring the theory which dates the prophecy before the Captivity, because the subject of it is not Judah alone, but the whole nation, with special reference to Ephraim, and therefore Assyria was just the country which it suited the prophet to mention. **The land of Gilead and Lebanon** = northern Palestine on both sides of the Jordan, the former home of the ten tribes. **Room . . . found,** because of their increase. Merivale, in the place above cited, accounts for the manner in which the Jews in the centuries just before Christ, swarmed over the whole Roman world, "from the Tiber to the Euphrates, from the pines of the Caucasus to the spice groves of Arabia Felix," by the insufficiency of their native land to support the immense population.

Ver. 11. **And he passes.** The subject, of course, is Jehovah, the discourse passing from direct to indirect address, in accordance with the Hebrew usage allowing such rapid transitions. To make צָרָה the subject (Calvin, Coccius, Syr.), is unnatural and frigid, besides connecting a feminine noun with a verb having a masculine suffix. This verse continues the figurative allusions of the preceding. Just as of old God gloriously vindicated his people in the passage over the Red Sea, so now He marches through the deep at the head of his chosen and smites down the roaring waves. The article in **the sea** points to the particular body of water through which Israel had once before been led,—the Arabian Gulf. יְאֹר almost always = Nile. Here the term **depths** or floods is properly applied to its vast and regular inundations. In the last clause the characteristic feature of Assyria is well expressed by **pride** (Is. x. 7), and that of Egypt by the **sceptre** or rod of the taskmasters.

Ver. 12. **And I strengthen.** The whole section is appropriately wound up with this emphatic promise. The entire strength, conduct, hope, and destiny of Israel lay in Jehovah. "The *name of Jehovah* is a comprehensive expression denoting his glory as manifested in history" (Hengstenberg). Trusting and serving the God thus revealed, they would find the past a pledge of the future, and see the divine perfections as gloriously illustrated in their behalf as at any former period.

This chapter, as has been said, continues and enlarges the promises of the preceding. After tracing the distresses of the people to their apostasy, it sets forth their deliverance as effected through actual conflicts, in which the might of Jehovah gives to the native leaders a force and courage which suffice to subdue foes otherwise far superior. This victory is followed by a large increase of population, not confined to Judah but also including Israel. Nor is there reason to doubt that the independence achieved by the Maccabees attracted very many of the exiles from the northern kingdom, who forgot the old causes of dissension, and united heartily in maintaining the reëstablished national centre in Jerusalem. This fusion at home led to a similar fusion abroad; and wherever Jews were found who preserved their hereditary faith at all, they still remembered Jehovah as the one who had chosen Zion, and considered themselves as constituent parts of one covenant people. So far the predictions of the chapter were fulfilled historically in the period extending from the establishment of Jewish independence to the time of the advent. In the last three verses the Prophet describes a far greater because spiritual blessing in terms borrowed from the old experience of the people. The drying up of the sea, the humiliation of Assyria, the overthrow of Egypt simply set forth the removal of all possible obstacles in the way of a spiritual return to God. The Lord will reclaim and bless them by procedures as marvelous as any that ever occurred in their former history.

But before this great event takes place, before the Church of the Old Testament passes into the form and character of the Church of the New Testament, a sad and peculiar experience is to be gone through. This is set forth in the striking imagery of the next chapter.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. In the opening verse of this chapter the Prophet comes into direct opposition to many of the so-called Scientists of our day. They affirm

that "without a disturbance of natural law quite as serious as the stoppage of an eclipse or the rolling the St. Lawrence up the Falls of Niagara, no act of humiliation, individual or national, could call one shower from heaven" (Tyndall). It follows, of course, that only those who believe that the miraculous is still active in nature can consistently join in prayers for fair weather and for rain. The Prophet, on the contrary, directs the people whenever the heavens withhold their moisture, to ask from the Lord what they need, and assures them that asking they shall obtain; and yet neither he nor his hearers supposed that this process involved a miracle in any proper sense of that term. It certainly implies the attainment of an end which without this means would not be accomplished. It is the combining and directing of natural forces so as to secure a certain result. This is what men are doing all the time, without dreaming that they are miracle-workers. Much more may God do it, who is not, like us, limited by second causes. In this very matter of rain, a scientific man announced some years ago a certain process by which an adequate rain-fall could at any time be secured. Whether his theory was valid or not, no one scouted it as impossible, or preposterous. Yet learned men deny to God what they allow to themselves. Creatures may compel the clouds, but the Creator may not. They may employ one and another natural law so as to achieve novel effects, but the Maker of the whole,

> "Who sets the bright procession on its way,
> And marshals all the order of the year,"

is shut up in the workmanship of his hands, and cannot possibly escape from the regular sequence of cause and effect. But this is simply the rejection, not merely of Christianity or of the Old Testament, but of all religion whatever. A God who has no control over nature is to all intents and purposes no God. Sentiments of reverence, gratitude, obligation, love, and dependence toward such a Being, are impossible. The doctrine of prayer, therefore, is a vital one. There never has been, there never can be a religion without communion with the object of worship. To deny the efficacy of prayer, even in such matters as the giving or withholding of rain, is to remand the human race into a state of practical atheism.

2. The question with man never is whether he will have a religion or not, but always whether he will have that which is true, or one that is false. Not only his intuitions, his moral convictions, but his dependent condition, his exposure to change, want, sorrow, and death, all compel him to look up to some superior invisible power, something nobler and better than himself. If this craving be not met by the truth, it surely will be by falsehood. A permanent state of atheistic unbelief is impossible. Such a state has never been seen in all the world's history. In ancient Israel there was a constant oscillation between the worship of Jehovah and the service of idols, but never the abnegation of all worship. And this is the alternative which confronts every man and every age. They may reject the true God and the revealed religion; but the inevitable result is superstition in some form, more or less refined. Just as among the Jews whenever they apostatized, "diviners" came to the front. When Saul could get no answer from the Lord, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by Prophets, he went to the Witch of Endor.

Intelligence and culture are no guard against such a result. If men will not believe the rational and true, they will believe the absurd and the false Our own land at this day furnishes conspicuous examples. Table-turnings and spirit-rappings have led captive many who turned away in scorn from the teachings of Christ and his Apostles. The voice of God, uttered with every kind and degree of evidence in his Word, has been given up for the sake of the pretended disclosures of the spirits of the dead; and the necromancy of the nineteenth century before Christ has been revived in the nineteenth century after Christ. And the results have been what was to be expected. On one hand a degree of unnatural excitement of the feelings and the imagination which terminated in an eclipse of reason, and on the other, a lowering of the tone of morals which undermined the family constitution, and swept away the surest safeguards of human society. It is as criminal and as dangerous to consult *diviners* now as it ever was in the days of ancient Israel. "Should not a people seek unto their God? [Should they seek] for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Is. viii. 19, 20).

3. The prediction of the return of Ephraim in this chapter (ver. 6) has been sometimes cited as evidence that the ten tribes are still somewhere existing as a separate community, and as such are yet to be restored to their own land. But this is an error. The words of the Prophet were fulfilled in the period to which he refers. Many of the transplanted Ephraimites fell away from the faith and became absorbed in the heathen by whom they were surrounded, but many who remained true to Jehovah, joined their fortunes with those of their brethren of Judah. Their common calamities softened and at last obliterated the old feelings of enmity toward each other. Jerusalem became again the central point of the whole nation, and while not a few actually shared in the restoration, others who remained in exile, yet adhered to the second temple, aided it by their gifts, and often attended the yearly festivals. Hence all the latter were comprehended under the term, the *Diaspora* (Jas i. 1). In the New Testament there are repeated allusions to the twelve tribes, conveying the distinct impression that the inhabitants of Palestine in our Lord's day represented both parts of the nation. There is no reason, therefore, for the pains which have been taken to discover them in some remote or obscure part of the globe. And indeed the hopeless disagreement of those who seek a historical identification of these exiles shows the vanity of the attempt. The foot of the Himalayas, the coast of Malabar, the interior of China, the Nestorians of Persia, and the Indians of North America, have all been claimed as containing the veritable descendants of the Hebrews whom Sargon carried away. This whole subject is treated with ability and learning in an article in the *Princeton Review* for April, 1873, by the Rev. John H. Shedd. The conclusions to which Mr. Shedd comes are thus stated: —

1. That the apostate Israelites were lost among the idolaters of the Assyrian Empire at the time of their apostasy.

2. That the true Israelites under Persian rule became identified with the captivity of Judah, and the nationality of the Ten Tribes was extinct.

3. That these Jews, embracing, since the time of Cyrus, the faithful of both Judah and Israel, greatly increased in numbers, were reinforced by emigrants from Palestine, and have sent off col

onies to all the East, throughout Persia, Tartary, and Thibet; but there is no Scriptural or historical basis for the idea that the "Ten Tribes" are living as a body in some obscure region or are found in any one nation.

4. That some at least of the communities of Jews still living in the land of their original exile, are lineal descendants of the Ten Tribes; and considering the history of those Jews, their present numbers of fifty or sixty thousand souls in Persia and Assyria, and several thousand more in Babylonia, they sufficiently solve the problem.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Melvill: *Ask ye rain.* Men seem practically to have but little remembrance that the mainspring of all the mechanism of second causes is in the hands of an invisible Creator; that it is not from what goes on in the hidden laboratories of what they call nature that season succeeds season, and shower and sunshine alternate with so much of beautiful and beneficent order, but that the whole arrangement is momentarily dependent upon the will and energy of that supreme Being who "sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers."

Calvin: *Grass in the field.* The Prophet no doubt includes here under one kind all things necessary for a happy life; for it is not the will of God to fill his faithful people in this world as though they were swine, but his design is to give them by means of earthly things, a taste of the spiritual life. *I am Jehovah their God.* He means by this that although he had for a time rejected the Jews, their adoption would not be void; for by calling Himself their God He reminds them of his covenant, as if He said that He had not in vain made a covenant with Abraham, and promised that his seed should be blessed. *And I will sow them.* This was an instance of the wonderful grace of God; for hence it happened that the knowledge of celestial truth shone everywhere; and at length when the Gospel was proclaimed, a freer access was had to the Gentiles, because Jews were dispersed through all lands. The first receptacles (*hospitia*) of the Gospel were the Synagogues. God thus scattered his seed here and there that it might in due time produce fruit beyond the expectation of all.

Pressel: *Diviners have seen a lie.* Unbelief has recourse to a crowd of superstitious devices, and by their folly and impotence is put to shame: Faith on the contrary turns to prayer and through it works wonders. *Passes through the sea.* For how many has Israel's wonderful passage through the Red Sea been a pattern of a wonderful escape through straits and sorrows of every kind! The text is one of the oldest examples of this use of the deliverance, but new ones are constantly occurring.

Jay: *I will strengthen them in the Lord.* The very assurance our hearts want. Its fulfillment will keep us in our work, not cause us to cease. It will be seasonable and proportioned to our needs. "As thy days," etc. It will come in God's own way, that is, in the use of the means He has appointed. These we are to employ, especially when we are not in a proper or lively frame; as fire is most needful when we are cold.

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5. ISRAEL'S REJECTION OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Chapter XI.

A. *Poetical Introduction* (vers. 1–3). B. *The Flock of Slaughter* (vers. 4–6). C. *The Prophet tries to be their Shepherd* (vers. 7, 8). D. *He Fails* (vers. 9–11). E. *He is contemptuously Rejected* (vers. 12, 13). F. *The Result* (ver. 14). G. *A worthless Shepherd takes Charge* (vers. 15, 16). H. *This Shepherd Punished* (ver. 17).

1 Open, O Lebanon, thy doors,
And let fire devour thy cedars.[1]
2 Howl, cypress, for the cedar has fallen,
For the lofty are laid waste;
Howl, ye oaks of Bashan,
For the high[2] forest has gone down.
3 A sound of the howling of the shepherds!
For their glory is laid waste;
A sound of the roaring of young lions!
For the pride of Jordan is laid waste.

4 Thus saith Jehovah, my God,
Feed[3] the flock of slaughter;[4]
5 Whose buyers slaughter them and are not guilty,
And their sellers say, Blessed be Jehovah, for I am getting rich,[5]
And their own shepherds spare them not.
6 For I will no more spare the inhabitants of the land, saith Jehovah,
And behold I give up the men,
Each into the hand of his neighbor and into the hand of his king,

And they lay waste[6] the land,
And I will not deliver out of their hand.

7 And I fed[7] the flock of slaughter, therefore[8] the most miserable sheep,[9] and I
took to myself two staves; the one[10] I called Beauty, the other I called Bands,
8 and I fed the flock. And I cut off the three[11] shepherds in one month, and my
9 soul became impatient with them, and their soul also abhorred me. And I said,

I will not feed you,
The dying, let it die,
And the cut off, let it be cut off,
And the remaining, let them devour each the flesh of the other.

10 And I took my staff Beauty and broke it asunder in order to destroy my cove-
11 nant with all peoples.[12] And it was destroyed in that day, and thus[13] the wretched
12 of the flock, who gave heed to me, knew that this was the word of Jehovah. And
I said to them, If it seem good to you, give me my wages;[14] and if not, forbear.
13 And they weighed as my wages thirty[15] pieces of silver. And Jehovah said to me,
Throw it to the potter, the noble price at which I am valued by them; and I took
the thirty pieces of silver, and threw it into the house of Jehovah, to the potter.
14 And I broke my second staff, Bands, to destroy the brotherhood[16] between Judah
and Israel.
15 And Jehovah said to me, Take again the implements[17] of a foolish shepherd,
16 For, behold, I raise up a shepherd in the land,
The perishing[18] he will not visit,
The straying[19] will he not seek for,
And the wounded he will not heal,
The strong[20] will he not feed;
But the flesh of the fat one he will eat,
And their hoofs he will break off.
Wo to the worthless[21] shepherd who forsakes[22] the flock!
A sword upon his arm!
And upon his right eye!
His arm shall be utterly withered,
And his right eye utterly blinded.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1.—Perhaps it would be more exact to render, "devour among thy cedars." Cf. 2 Sam. xviii. 8 for the use of אָכַל with the preposition בְּ.

2 Ver. 2.—For בָּצוּר many MSS. and two early editions read בָּצִיר, which is also found in the Keri; but it is generally considered to be a needless attempt at correction. The Kethib is lit., *cut off*, h. *inaccessible*, which Dr. Riggs gives in his emendations.

3 Ver. 4.—רְעֵה. *Feed* is a miserably inadequate version of this word It means to perform the whole work of a shepherd, of which feeding is but one part. Guiding, defending, and ruling are also included. The same is true of the Greek equivalent ποιμαινῶ, but not of the Latin *pasco*.

4 Ver. 4.—"Flock of Slaughter" Keil renders of *strangling*, and says that the cognate verb "does not mean to slay but to strangle." If it has this meaning in the cognate Arabic form, which I doubt, it is certainly lost in the Hebrew. See any of the Lexicons or Concordances. צֹאן הַהֲרֵגָה = צֹאן טִבְחָה (Ps. xliv. 23). The flock destined or accustomed to be slaughtered.

5 Ver. 5.—וָאעְשִׁר is merely a syncopated form of וָאַעֲשִׁיר. The *vav* expresses consequence, and is translated accordingly. The tenses are futures expressing continued action. The plural verbs are employed in a distributive sense; *they*, *i. e.*, each of them, *will say*, etc.

6 Ver. 6.—כִּתְּתוּ, lit., smite in pieces = lay waste.

7 Ver. 7.—The E. V. "and I *will* feed," although it follows the LXX. and Vulgate, is opposed alike to grammar and to sense. The full force of the *vav conv.* is, "And so I fed." Exactly the same form is found in the last clause of the verse.

8 Ver. 7.—לָכֵן has been very variously rendered. The LXX. read it and the following word, as one, and so made *Canaannite* of it, which Blayney adopts. The Vulgate, *propter hoc* = therefore, is the usual sense of the word but confessedly hard here. Some (Kimchi, Ewald, Henderson) make it a noun with a preposition = in respect to truth, *i. e.*, *truly*, but there is no other instance of the kind. Others (Hitzig) render *on account of you*, which also lacks authority. In this conflict of opinion, it is better to adhere to usage and render *therefore*; but then this cannot give the reason for the Shepherd's assumption of his office as Hengstenberg claims, for it is too far from the verb; but must assign the consequence of the flock's description, thus, And so I fed the flock of slaughter, therefore (*i. e.*, because so named), a most miserable flock.

9 Ver. 7.— עֲנִיֵּי הַצֹּאן is an emphatic positive = superlative, *the most miserable sheep.*

10 Ver. 7.— אחד. Köhler insists that this must be regarded as a true construct, depending upon מהם understood, but it is better to take it as construct used for the absolute, as elsewhere (Green, *H. G.*, § 228 *a.*).

11 Ver. 8.— "*The* three shepherds." Pressel shows that Köhler has quite failed to overthrow Hitzig's assertion, that אֶת־שְׁלֹשֶׁת הָרֹעִים *must* be thus translated (cf. vers. 12, 13; Gen. xl. 10, 12, 18).

12 Ver. 10.— עַמִּים. Peoples. Cf. Text. and Gram. on viii. 20.

13 Ver. 11 — כֵּן. Not *truly*, nor *therefore*, but *thus.*

14 Ver 12.— שְׂכָרִי. Not *price* (E. V.), but reward or wages. The word in the next verse, similarly but correctly rendered *price* in the E. V., is a totally different one, הַיְקָר.

15 Ver. 12.— שֶׁקֶל as usual is omitted before כֶּסֶף.

16 Ver. 14.— אַחֲוָה — ἅπ. λεγ. Found in cognate languages and the Mishna. A token of post-exile composition.

17 Ver. 15.— כְּלִי is a collective singular.

18 Ver. 16.— הַנִּכְ׳. The connection requires us to render the participle in the present, instead of the past, as E. V. "cut off."

19 Ver 16.— נַּעַר is with LXX., Vulg., and Syr. to be taken as formed from נער, to shake, *Piel*, to disperse, Arab. نعر = *in fugam vertere* (Gesenius, Fürst, *et al.*). Hengstenberg makes it the ordinary Hebrew word of the same radicals, but this is never applied to animals, and if it were, could not have the meaning which he claims, namely, *tender.*

20 Ver. 16.— נִּצָּבָה, what *stands upon its feet*, *i. e.*, is strong and healthy. Henderson derives it from an Arabic root نصب = to be wearied, feeble, which he thinks required by the connection. But the picture is the more vivid when it shows all classes and conditions of the flock to be equally neglected. Dr. Riggs renders "the well (*or* sound)."

21 Ver. 17.— אֱלִיל, not *idol*, but *worthless*, or, as Köhler says, *mock-shepherd.* Dr. Riggs gives "Shepherd of vanity," which itself needs interpretation.

22 Ver. 17.— רֹעִי, עֹזְבִי paragogic vowel (Green, *H. G.*, § 61, 6 *a.*), found chiefly in poetical passages.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This chapter, on any view of its meaning, presents a marked contrast to the tenor of chaps. ix. and x. The latter are full of encouragement. They speak much of conflict, but uniformly represent the covenant people as victorious, and paint a bright picture of increase, prosperity, and happiness. Here, on the contrary, is a sad scene of general overthrow caused by deliberate and persistent wickedness. The explanation is well given by Calvin: "These predictions appear to contradict one another. But it was necessary that the blessings of God should first of all be announced to the Jews in order that they might engage with greater alacrity in the work of building the temple, and feel assured that they were not wasting their time. It was now desirable to address them in a different style. lest, as was too generally the case, hypocrites should be hardened by their vain confidence in these promises. It was also requisite, in order that the faithful should take alarm in time, and earnestly draw near to God; since nothing is more destructive than false security; and whenever sin is committed without restraint, the judgment of God is close at hand." Just then, as in the former part of the book, there is interjected, in the midst of a series of encouraging symbolical visions, a pair of representations (ch. vi.) setting forth the certainty and severity of the punishment of wickedness, so here, after exhibiting Judæa's protection from Alexander, and also (with a passing glance at Zion's future king, Messiah) the triumph of the Maccabees and the recovery of former strength and influence, the Prophet passes on to lift the veil from the final outcome of Jewish obduracy, and its terrible results.

The first three verses describe the ruin of the entire land, in words arranged with great rhetorical power, full of poetic imagery and lively dramatic movement. Then the cause of this widespread desolation is set forth, not by vision as in the earlier portion, but by symbolical action or process subjectively wrought. Israel is a flock doomed to perish by the divine judgment. The Prophet personating his Lord makes an effort to avert the threatened infliction. He therefore assumes the office of shepherd, equipped with staves fitted to secure success. He seeks to rid them of false leaders, and win them to ways of truth and right. But the attempt is vain, because of their obdurate wickedness, and the issue is a mutual recoil. He loathes them; they abhor him. Accordingly he significantly breaks his staves in token that all is over. But after breaking one, and before doing the same to the other, the shepherd asks a reward for his unavailing effort. He receives one, but it is so trifling that he had better have received none. They insult him with the offer of the price of a slave (vers. 4–14). Then the scene changes. Instead of a wise, kind shepherd, the Prophet personates one of an opposite character. The gentle crooks, Beauty and Bands, are replaced by knives and battle-axes. The flock, so far from being fed and guided and guarded, is torn and devoured, and then at last its misguided rulers are smitten and palsied, and so the curtain falls (vers. 15–17).

Vers. 1–3 are a vivid poetical apostrophe, introductory to what follows in the rest of the chapter. A fierce conflagration sweeps over the land, devouring alike mountain forests, and lowland pastures; and a cry of despair is heard from man and beast.

Ver. 1. **Open, O Lebanon, etc.** Instead of simply declaring that Lebanon shall be devastated,

the Prophet summons the lofty mountain to open its doors for the consuming fire.

Ver. 2. **Howl, cypress, for the cedar,** etc. Continuing his apostrophe, he calls on the less important trees to bewail the fall of the stately cedars as foreshadowing their own impending doom, for if the steep inaccessible forest on the mountain side is prostrated, much more must the cypresses and oaks be consumed. But the crashing ruin extends yet further.

Ver. 3. **A sound of the howling of the shepherds!** The flames spread over the low grounds and pastures of the wilderness, and the Prophet hears the outcry of the shepherds over the destruction of what is their hope and dependence. With this is mingled **the roaring of young lions,** driven by the fiery blast from their favorite lair, the thickets on the river banks, known as the **pride of the Jordan** (Jer. xii. 5; xlix. 19; l. 44), so called because the luxuriant bushes and reeds inclose the stream with a garland of fresh and beautiful verdure.

To what does this vivid and startling representation refer? (1.) A very old Jewish interpretation makes it descriptive of the overthrow of the temple, which is here called Lebanon, because so much of the wood of that goodly mountain was used in its construction. So Eusebius, Jerome, Grotius, and Henderson. But this, as Calvin says, is frigid. Indeed, it gives no explanation of Bashan, or of ver. 3. (2.) Others applied it to Jerusalem, which is liable to the same objection. (3.) Most of the moderns refer it to the holy land, some supposing that the cedars, cypresses, etc., denote heathen rulers who are swept away by a general judgment (Hoffman, Umbreit, Kliefoth); others holding that these terms denote the chief men of Israel (Hitzig, Maurer, Hengstenberg, Ewald). But any such close pressing of a passage like this, the most vigorous and poetical in all the book, is both needless and unwise. Standing as a prelude to the fearful doom of the flock of slaughter, it is simply a highly figurative representation of the overthrow of all that is lofty and glorious and powerful in the nation and kingdom of the Jews. The choice of the local terms used (Lebanon, Bashan, etc.) may have been suggested by ch. x. 10; but even if not so, they may very well stand for the whole kingdom. A poet is not to be bound by the rules of a historiographer. Pressel, quite consistently with his general view of the second part of Zechariah, sees in this prelude only a literal description of the march of Tiglath Pileser, when he invaded Israel in the days of Pekah (2 Kings xv. 29). But surely the Assyrian king did not set fire to the cedars of Lebanon or the reeds of the Jordan.

Vers. 4–14. A justly celebrated section, of which Pressel says it "exhibits Isaiah's power and beauty of language, as well as his fullness of Messianic thought." By command of Jehovah the prophet assumes the office of a shepherd over his flock, and feeds it until he is compelled by its ingratitude to break his staves of office and give up the sheep to destruction.

Ver. 4. **Thus saith Jehovah.** To whom does He speak? The earlier interpreters said, to the Angel of the Lord or Messiah. But this is disproved by the commission in ver. 15 given to the same person: Take *again* the implements of a foolish shepherd, *seq.*, — language which, as all admit, could not be addressed to the Messiah. Others say that the prophet in his individual capacity is addressed (Hitzig, Ewald, *et al.*), but the whole strain of the passage, the illustrative parallels in other prophets, the destroying of other shepherds (ver. 8), and the thirty pieces of silver, all show that Zechariah in person could not have been intended. It remains then to view him as addressed in his typical or representative capacity, not, however, as standing either for the prophetic order (Hoffman), or the mediatorial office (Köhler), for no human agency could possibly perform the works here recounted; but as personating the great Being who was predicted by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, under the form of the Good Shepherd. **Flock of slaughter.** Not the whole human race (Hoffman), but, as nearly all agree, the nation of Israel. Their condition is farther described in the next verse.

Ver. 5. **Whose buyers,** etc. Not "possessors," as E. V., but "buyers," both because this is the primary signification of the word, and because the antithesis of "sellers" in the next clause requires it. These buyers and sellers are those who do just as they please with the covenant people, consulting only their own interests. The one class **slaughter them and are not guilty,** *i. e.*, do not incur blame, so far, at least, as the mere act is concerned, since they only execute what is a righteous punishment from God. This statement is just the reverse of the one in Jer. ii. 3, "Israel is holy to Jehovah . . . all who devour him *become guilty*, evil will come upon them," where it appears that while Israel was holy, none could injure him without incurring guilt. Now, however, the case is different. Cf. Jer. li. 6 (in Hebrew), where the same word, אָשַׁם, is used. The other class **say, Blessed be Jehovah,** etc., *i. e.*, they make merchandise of the people, and yet consider the gains thus made perfectly honest, such as they can properly thank God for bestowing. These buyers and sellers are heathen rulers and oppressors. The last clause completes the picture by setting forth **their own shepherds,** *i. e.*, their domestic rulers, civil and ecclesiastical, as those who do not **spare them,** — a pregnant negative.

Ver. 6. **For I will no more . . . saith Jehovah.** This verse assigns the reason for the direction given in ver. 4. Jehovah, being about to visit upon his people the just desert of their sins, will yet make one more effort to save them. If this fails, they will be given up to the worst evils, namely, inward discord and subjugation to a stranger. Thus apprehended, **the land** is the land of Israel, and its inhabitants = the flock of slaughter (Calvin, Hengstenberg). Others (Keil, Köhler) take the phrase as = the nations of the world, and suppose the sense to be that Jehovah will no longer suffer them to oppress his people with impunity. This is grammatically possible, but needlessly diverts the current of thought in the passage, which is the sins and sufferings of the chosen people. **His king,** *i. e.*, foreign oppressor. Cf. Hos. xi. 5. The last clause fitly completes the sad picture.

Ver. 7. **And I fed,** etc. The prophet assumes the duty enjoined upon him. He undertakes to discharge the functions of a shepherd to a flock which is in a very sad condition, — so much so as to be already devoted to destruction. That is, dropping the figure, he proposes to guide and feed and defend a people so wicked and hardened that they are on the point of being given over to the just retribution of their sinful ways. He begins by assuming the implements of office. **I took . . . two staves,** such as shepherds use. One of these he named נֹעַם, which most expositors

(Ewald, Umbreit, Keil, Henderson) render, Grace or Favor, but it is better to adhere to the primary signification of the word, Beauty or Loveliness (Hitzig, Hengstenberg, Maurer, Köhler), as in Ps. xxvii. 4, xc. 17, *beauty of Jehovah* = all that makes Him an object of affection or desire. Of course, the staff denotes the loveliness, not of the people (Bleek), but of God. The other staff he named חֹבְלִים. This word the LXX. (σχοίνισμα) and the Vulgate (*funiculi*) seem to have read as if pointed, חֲבָלִים, for which there is no authority. As it stands, the word is masc. plural of Kal participle. Luther, and many others after him, render "destroyers," but the verb never has this meaning in the Kal. Another class render it "the bound" or "the allied" (Hitzig, Hengstenberg, Maurer, Kliefoth), but this would require a passive participle. It only remains to adopt the legitimate, natural sense — "binders, or binding ones" (Marckius, Gesenius, Fürst, Keil). The plural may be explained as a plural of excellence, and the general sense is well enough expressed by the E. V., *bands*. (Gesenius says, *Constringens poetice pro fune*). **And I fed the flock**, *i. e.*, with these two staves, one indicating God's favor and protection from outward foes; the other, an internal union and fellowship. The next verse shows what he did in the discharge of this office.

Ver. 8. **And I cut off. . . . one day. Who are the three shepherds?** Forty different answers have been given, which may thus be classified: (1.) Those who referred them to individuals, from Jerome's Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, to Calmet's Roman emperors, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. The impossibility of any agreement upon the point shows that three distinct persons cannot be intended. (2.) The "later criticism" maintains that the three shepherds are the three kings of Israel, Zechariah, Shallum, and Menahem; but these were not cut off in one month, and even if that designation of time were referred (as it cannot be) to the duration of their reigns, it would apply only to one of them, Shallum; 2 Kings xv. 10-13. Nor was their cutting off an act of mercy even to Israel, which the cutting off in the text is evidently meant to be. (3.) Others suppose that the phrase points to the three imperial rulers who became liege-lords of the covenant nation, *i. e.*, the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Macedonian dynasties (Ebrard, Kliefoth, Köhler, Keil). But it is not consistent with usage to call these shepherds; in no conceivable sense were they cut off in one month; when cut off they were succeeded by another, a fourth, quite as much an oppressor of God's people as they were; and besides, Babylon was already destroyed at the time Zechariah wrote. (4.) It is better to fall back on the old opinion (Theodoret, Cyril), that the three shepherds are the three orders by which Israel was ruled, — the civil authorities, the priests, and the prophets. These three classes are mentioned together in Jer. ii. 8, 18 as perverters of the nation and causers of its destruction. And although in the future to which the passage refers, there were no longer prophets, yet there was a class, the Scribes or teachers of the law, who stood in the same relation to the people, and partly, at least, discharged the same functions. See the three classes mentioned by our Lord in Matt. xvi. 21. **In one month** = in a period which is long when compared with one day, but brief as contrasted with other periods of time. "It shows that **the extermination of the three shepherds is not to** be regarded as a single act like the expiation (iii. ix.), but as a continuous act which occupies some time" (Hengstenberg). The plural suffix, בָּהֶם, in the next clause, **My soul became impatient . . . abhorred me**, by the earlier interpreters and by Hengstenberg, Kliefoth, *et al.*, is referred to the shepherds, but it is certainly more natural to refer it to "the flock" in ver. 7, and consider the clause as furnishing the reason of the rejection stated in the next verse, which is evidently aimed at the Jewish nation as a whole. The Good Shepherd lost patience with their perverse impenitence, and they, on the other hand, loathed him for his spirituality and holiness.

Ver. 9. **And I said. . . . flesh of the other.** The shepherd renounces his flock. **I will not feed you**, *i. e.*, I will no longer be your shepherd. The futures in the second half of the verse are by some taken strictly as predictions, but it is more vivid and more natural, like the older versions, to render them optatively in the sense of surrender. All kindly control is withdrawn, and the flock is left to receive the appropriate consequences of its fatal rejection of the means of deliverance. The three forms of calamity mentioned are death by natural causes, plague or famine; violence at the hand of foreign foe; and intestine discord. On the last clause, compare Is. ix. 20, 21. The fulfillment of these words in the history of Jerusalem is well known.

Ver. 10. **And I took my staff. . . . nations.** What is predicted in the foregoing verse is here exhibited in a symbolical action — the breaking of the staff, Beauty, — the explanation of which is immediately added. The Lord will remove the restraint which He had hitherto laid upon the enmity of foreign nations. See this restraint from violence expressed in the form of a covenant in Job v. 23; Hos. ii. 18; Ezek. xxxiv. 25. עַמִּים has here its usual sense of peoples or nations, and not that of the tribes of Israel, as Calvin and some of the moderns affirm (cf. xii. 6; Micah iv. 5).

Ver. 11. **And it was destroyed . . . word of Jehovah.** The covenant was annulled, just as the staff had been broken; the thing signified answered to the sign. This was not observed by the flock at large, but the wretched portion of it, the small company who gave heed to the Lord (cf. John x. 4, 5, 14, 15), recognized the fulfillment of a divine word (cf. Jer. xxxii. 8). "In that day," *i. e.*, that in which the staff was broken.

Ver. 12. **And I said to them. . . . pieces of silver.** *To them* would at first sight refer to the wretched among the sheep just mentioned, but the connection, and the form of the inquiry, which aims simply to ascertain whether they are willing to acknowledge and appreciate his pastoral care, show that it must be addressed to the whole flock. His leaving the matter to their pleasure — "if it seem good," — indicates that he served them not for wages, but in obedience to the Divine will (Köhler). The wages, however, were due. They are usually explained to mean repentance and faith or heartfelt piety. What they offered was thirty pieces of silver, the compensation for a slave who had been killed (Ex. xxi. 32), the price for which a female slave could be purchased (Hos. iii. 2). Such an offer was "more offensive than a direct refusal" (Hengstenberg). Accordingly it was contemptuously rejected, as the next verse shows.

Ver. 13. **And Jehovah said. . . . to the potter.** As the prophet acted in the name of the

Lord, the Lord regards the wages of the shepherd as offered to Himself, and therefore tells his representative what to do with the miserable sum. "**The noble price at which I am valued**" is, of course, an ironical expression, — one of the few instances in Scripture in which that form of speech occurs. This renders it exceedingly improbable that the Lord would direct such a sum to be put into the treasury, as many interpret his words, "Throw to the potter," to mean, either taking יוֹצֵר to be a copyist's error for אוֹצָר = treasury or treasurer (Syr., Kimchi, *et al.*); or altering the last vowel of the former, and making it synonymous with the latter (Jahn, Hitzig); or deriving the word from the intransitive יצר, to be *narrow*, and rendering it "cleft in the treasure chest," which Pressel claims as a well-grounded and simple explanation! There is no authority for altering the text, and יוֹצֵר always means an image-maker or potter. It seems clear that the phrase is a sort of proverb, and is used contemptuously; like our common saying, Throw it to the dogs. So much is evident, even if we reject the account which Hengstenberg gives of its origin. He argues from Jer. xviii. 2, xix. 2, that there was a potter employed about the Temple, that his workshop was in the Valley of Hinnom, which from the time of Josiah had been fearfully polluted in every possible way, and that hence his pottery became an unclean spot. He insists that our passage contains an allusion to the act of Jeremiah (ch. xix.) when, with several of the elders and priests he went to the Valley of Hinnom, and there broke a potter's earthen vessel, and said, "Even so will I do unto this place, saith the Lord, as one breaketh a potter's vessel that cannot be made whole again, and they shall bury them in Tophet because there is no more room. . . . . and I will make this city like Tophet." Hengstenberg claims that the casting of the thirty pieces to the potter was simply a renewal of the old symbol and a fresh pledge of God's purpose to punish. It is objected to this view with much force that the potter did not certainly dwell in Hinnom, and that if he did, this fact would not make him personally unclean. Köhler explains the phrase as meaning, "The sum is just large enough to pay a potter for the pitchers and pots which he furnishes, and which are thought of so little value that men are easily comforted for the breaking of any by the thought that others can readily be obtained in their stead." This, however, does not account for the word "Throw," which is emphatic. It is best to rest in the general conception of a contemptuous rejection of the offered wages. In the execution of the command the prophet threw the money in the house of Jehovah, which Hengstenberg explains as meaning that it was to be carried thence to the potter, in reply to which it is justly said that if that were the prophet's meaning, he expresses himself very obscurely. The circumstance is, no doubt, significant, and may express either that the rejection of the wages was done in Jehovah's name and by his authority, or that being done in the sanctuary where the people assembled for worship, it indicated that they would be held accountable for their course. This shameful payment by the people leads to another token of Jehovah's displeasure.

Ver. 14. **And I broke . . . and Israel.** The evil threatened here is worse than the former. It is the loss of all fraternal unity, represented under the figure of the old disruption of the nation in the time of Jeroboam. This verse is a sad difficulty in the way of those who refer the composition of the Second Part of Zechariah to a period prior to the Captivity, for to account for this verse they must put the period back to the days of Solomon, which is quite inconceivable. The breaking up of the nation into parties bitterly hostile to each other, was one of the most marked peculiarities of the later Jewish history, and greatly accelerated the ruin of the popular cause in the Roman war.

Vers. 15–17. Since Israel rejected the good shepherd, they should be tended by shepherds of a very different class. This truth is represented by a fresh symbolical action.

Ver. 15. **And Jehovah said . . . . shepherd. Again** points back to ver. 7, and shows that the present action is of the same symbolic character as the one there recorded. A crook, a bag, a pipe, a knife, etc., were the articles usually carried by shepherds. The nature of these other implements is not specified, but they were doubtless of a character fitted rather to injure than to benefit the flock. **Foolish,** with the usual Scriptural implication of wickedness. "The term directs attention to the fact that the rulers of the nation are so blinded by the judicial punishment inflicted by God, as to be unable to see that whilst their fury is directed against the nation they are undermining their own welfare" (Hengstenberg). Who is meant by this evil shepherd? The "later critics" say, Pekah, or Hosea, or Menahem. Others say, Herod (Henderson), the Romans (Hoffman, Köhler, Keil), or the whole body of native rulers (Hengstenberg). I prefer to combine the last two and understand the shepherd to represent the ruling power in whomsoever vested. The point of the prediction is that just they who ought to protect and aid the people would oppress and destroy them. They are presented in the form of an ideal unity in order to complete the antithesis to the one good shepherd. The next verse describes the conduct of this evil ruler.

Ver. 16. **For behold I raise . . . . break off.** He does the very opposite of what Christ is represented as doing in Is. xlii. 3. He not merely neglects, but destroys (cf Ezek. xxxiv. 3, 4). **The perishing.** The present rendering in the text is equally grammatical with the past adopted in E. V., and more consistent with the verb *visit*. The whole verse is striking in its complete enumeration of particulars, showing how far this evil ruler falls short of what is involved in the oriental conception of a shepherd. The history of Israel after the flesh furnishes for centuries one continuous commentary upon the fidelity of this delineation. The breaking off of **hoofs** expresses the ferocious greed of the shepherds who will rend even these extremities rather than lose a shred of the flesh. This is better than the view (Ewald, Hitzig) which makes it refer to injuries caused by driving the flock over rough and stony roads. But these merciless masters are to meet due retribution.

Ver. 17. **Woe to the worthless . . . blinded.** The **arm** is the organ of strength, the **right eye** of vigilance. As these are the members which instead of guarding the flock as they should have done, shamefully abused it, they are specified as the objects of punishment. The apparent jumble of metaphorical expressions in threatening a sword upon the arm and the eye, and then declaring that the former shall be withered and the other blinded, has led some (Jahn, Bunsen, Pressel) to give to חֶרֶב the pointing חֹרֶב = dryness (as Vulgate, Arab. and Sam. have done in Deut. xxviii. 22).

But it is better to allow that the Prophet connects several punishments together in order to render prominent the greatness of the retribution. The sacred writers are not concerned about the requirements of an artificial rhetoric where the sense is abundantly plain (cf. Is. lxii. 5). A similar reason may have led Rosenmüller to follow the Chaldee in changing the verse from the liveliest poetry into the jejunest prose by rendering, "Woe to the shepherd who is like a butcher, whose knife is in his hand and whose eye is upon the sheep to slay them."

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The rejection of Israel after the flesh is the one sad subject of this chapter. The picture is wholly dark, unrelieved by a single ray of light. The impression made by the opening verses, the vivid startling prelude, is deepened all the way through to the end. A whirlwind of flame sweeps through the entire land, laying waste mountain and plain, forests and meadows, and drying up even streams and rivers. Men and beasts are overtaken together, and their cries of terror and despair indicate the completeness of the fiery ruin. It seems as if the Prophet, rising with the awful grandeur of his theme, had condensed into a few poetic lines the substance of the long chapters in which Moses of old had predicted the divine judgment upon an unfaithful people. The national Israel had enjoyed peculiar privileges, but such privileges always draw with them increased responsibility. As Jehovah said by the mouth of Amos (iii. 2), "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities." Repeatedly in the course of their previous history had God visited them with his rod, but there had always been a recovery. War, pestilence, or famine had executed his wrath; or they were sold into the hand of their enemies for a longer or shorter period; and once they had actually been transplanted into a foreign land where they remained for more than two generations. But in the end the rod was lifted off, and they resumed their former condition. Now, however, there was to be a final act of judgment, one summing up in itself all that had gone before, and expressing once for all the wrath of God upon obdurate impenitence. The unfaithful trustees should be dispossessed of their trust, their precious inheritance given to others, and themselves cast out to become a hissing and a by-word. Foreign foes and civil discords would concur to work their destruction, and they who should be their protectors would become their oppressors. So without friends or helpers in heaven or on earth, they would pass away as an organized nation, and live only to perpetuate the memory of their past history, and teach more vividly its great lessons of sin and retribution.

2. But prior to the consummation of this great act of judgment, before the fire was yet kindled, the Lord determined to make one last effort to save the wretched people. This is set forth in the striking symbolism of the chapter, by a shepherd who offers to take charge of the flock notwithstanding its miserable condition. Instead of bearing a single crook, he is furnished with two staves. These have names, expressing in one case the divine favor which wards off all external foes; in the other, union or concord, which when it exists excludes the evils sure to be engendered by mutual distrust and alienation. But the diligence and affection of the shepherd produced no effect. The fore-doomed flock turned away from him with loathing. The kindly effort miserably failed. The passage bears a striking analogy to the parable of the wicked husbandmen (Matt. xxi. 33, 34; Mark xii. 1–12). The lord of the vineyard had repeatedly sent messengers to receive of its fruits, but these were abused and injured as often as they were sent. "At last he sent his Son, saying, They will reverence my Son." But even this means failed. The Son was no more regarded than the servants had been. On the contrary, he was cast out of the vineyard and slain. The contemporary Jews, when asked by our Lord what would be the fate of these wicked husbandmen, answered promptly that they would be miserably destroyed, and the vineyard let out to others who would render the fruits in their season. They thus pronounced their own sentence. For the Saviour, after reminding them of the stone which the builders rejected and which yet became the head of the corner, declared with great solemnity, "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Nothing more was to be done. The last and crowning manifestation of the divine mercy had been made, and yet, so far from awakening and reclaiming the infatuated people, it only incensed them, and brought wrath and ill-doing upon the bearer of the message. Just so with the flock Zechariah describes. They had the services of Him who justly calls himself the Good Shepherd, under whom all may find protection and repose, green pastures, and running streams. But they would none of Him. He came unto his own, and his own received Him not. There was a deliberate and peremptory rejection of God's unspeakable gift. When the furious crowd, gathered before the tribunal of Pilate, rent the air with shouts, "Away with Him, crucify Him," the Roman governor asked in wonder, Shall I crucify your king? Instantly came the startling answer from the heads of the nation, "We have no king but Cæsar" (John xix. 15). These decisive words terminated the case. Pilate ceased to remonstrate, and gave sentence that it should be as they required. Then was filled the measure of Israel's iniquity. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now have they no cloke for their sin. . . . . If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (John xv. 22–24). Israel rejected the good shepherd, and was itself in turn rejected. The two staves were broken, and he who held them relinquished his office. Neither Beauty nor Bands any longer performed their grateful function. To break a shepherd's crook is a very simple act, but as performed by one who represented the Good Shepherd, it expressed a most fearful truth — the final abandonment of the flock by the only being who could feed, guide, or defend it. Ever since, the miserable sheep have experienced the weight of Jehovah's words: Woe unto them when I depart from them!

3. The consideration of the interesting critical and exegetical questions suggested by the quotation of vers. 12, 13, in Matthew xxvii. 9, 10, properly belongs to the interpretation of that Gospel. See Lange *in loc.* Although the Evangelist attributes the language he cites to Jeremiah, there can scarcely be a doubt that he does in fact quote from Zechariah. The case then is one which illustrates very well the principle upon which such applica-

tions of the Old Testament are made. The substance of the thought contained in vers. 12, 13, is that the services of the good shepherd were contemptuously undervalued and rejected by the flock, and that this scornful rejection was indignantly rebuked by the Lord. Now this would have been fulfilled even had there been no sale by Judas for a precise sum of money, and no application of that money to a specific purpose. Just as in the corresponding case in ix. 9, 10, the prediction respecting our Lord's lowly and peaceful position and character would have been accomplished, had He not made his formal entry into Jerusalem riding upon an ass. But it pleased the Lord in that case and in this, not only to fulfill the general purport of the prediction, but even to bring about an exact correspondence in minor and unessential details. Thus in the prophecy, Israel depreciates the worth of the shepherd's services, estimating them at thirty pieces of silver; in the narrative of the gospels it appears that this is the precise sum for which the Saviour was betrayed. In the prophecy, the sum paid for the possession of the shepherd was indignantly cast away by him; in the history it was so ordered by the Lord that the priests and elders did not dare to put in the treasury the price of the Saviour's blood, for they said, "it is not lawful." In the prophecy the thirty pieces of silver are thrown to the potter, *i. e.*, contemptuously spurned, yet this is done in the temple; in the history the money which the wretched traitor had received was brought back by him to those who had given it, and when they declined to take it, "he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple;" but the ecclesiastical authorities, unwilling to apply the coin to any sacred use, devoted it to the purchase of ground to be used as a burying place for strangers, and the land which they purchased was "*the potter's* field," a field which doubtless was selected because it was so broken and marred as to be unfit for agricultural purposes, but which yet in its very name contained a peculiar suggestiveness. Thus did divine providence bring about a striking correspondence between the symbolical treatment and action of the prophet and the actual course of events in the betrayal and rejection of our Saviour.

4. The choice of men never lies between a good shepherd and none at all, but between a good shepherd and a bad one. Israel of old rejected the gracious provision offered by the Lord Jesus, and the alternative was ruin. The language of the prophet is vigorous and incisive. He describes a shepherd who not only fails in every duty of his office, but does the exact opposite, wounding where he should heal, and devouring whom he should feed, until the flock is miserably destroyed. But even more forcible are the words of the Saviour (Luke xix. 41), when he wept over Jerusalem, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." The fulfillment of these fearful words is well known. The ruin of the place and people was overwhelming. Scarce any siege in the history of the world was attended with such cruelties and horrors as preceded and followed the fall of Jerusalem. There was a deliberate and energetic effort to exterminate the race. The whole power of the Roman Empire was brought to bear upon this one province, as Merivale says, "with a barbarity of which no other example occurs in the records of civilization." And the subsequent history of the Jews for many centuries illustrated in the same manner the symbol of Zechariah. Their rulers were evil shepherds, mock shepherds. Giving nothing, they exacted everything. They taxed, they pillaged, they oppressed, they insulted, habitually and on principle. The Jew was an outcast without any rights, and when tolerated it was only as a sponge to be squeezed when it was full. The furious crowd in the judgment hall of Pilate said, "His blood be on us and on our children." They were taken at their word, and the self-imposed malediction followed them from age to age and from country to country, and does not seem even yet to have been exhausted.

5. God often uses instruments which He afterwards destroys, scourging with a rod and then breaking the rod and casting it into the fire. The worthless shepherds who battened like vultures on the wretched flock of Judæa, the haughty Romans who inflicted the divine judgments upon the apostate and incorrigible nation, were themselves in turn exposed to a righteous retribution. The time came when there was a sword upon their arms and their eyes. She who had spoiled so many lands and peoples was herself spoiled, and the city which had gathered into her walls the precious things of all the earth became the prey of the barbarian. Her former inhabitants have disappeared from the face of the earth, and new races occupy their seats, while the Jew still lives, the lineal and indubitable descendant of the men among whom our Lord was born and by whom He was rejected. The arch of Titus commemorates in pictured stone the overthrow of Judæa and the plunder of its sacred vessels, but it likewise commemorates the overthrow of the conqueror and the utter ruin of that vast empire which survives only in these mute relics of its ancient grandeur.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL

MOORE, ver. 6. Wicked rulers are a curse of God on a wicked nation. Now as religion tends to prevent such rulers, or at least prevent their choice, there is an obvious connection between politics and religion. Church and State may and ought to be separated; politics and religion ought not, for thus the State becomes exposed to the curse of God, and political evil follows in the train of moral evil. — Ver. 7. *Bands*. Union of feeling in a people is a mark of the favor of God, and disunion a token of his wrath, and usually the beginning of a downfall. — Ver. 8. Christ cannot be rejected with impunity. Even the Jews who "did it ignorantly in unbelief," paid a terrible penalty for their crime; how much more terrible will be the punishment of those who have all their unbelief without any of their ignorance. — Ver. 12. Men now sometimes reject Christ for a far less reward than thirty pieces of silver, and of course with far more guilt than Judas.

WORDSWORTH: Ver. 10. *Break my covenant with all peoples.* "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, for the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the

lot of his inheritance" (Deut. xxxii. 8, 9). This was God's compact with all nations and with Israel. He assigned a special inheritance to Judah; and no people could deprive them of it as long as they were true to Him. But now that they have rejected Christ, He has broken that compact; Jerusalem is trodden down by the Gentiles, and the Jews are wanderers and outcasts in all lands. — Ver. 15. *A foolish Shepherd.* Good shepherds, says Cyril, have a light pastoral staff by which they guide the sheep; but the evil shepherd maltreats and belabors the sheep with rude handling. So in spiritual things, the good Christian pastor deals gently, tenderly, and lovingly with his flock; but the bad pastor is impatient and rules them with roughness and violence; and does not bring back the sheep when astray, nor guard them against the wolf and the robber, nor heal those which are sick; and does not feed them with the wholesome food of sound doctrine, but with poisonous heresies. — Ver. 17. *The Idol Shepherd.* It would not be easy to point out any other shepherd who makes himself to be an idol, except the Bishop of Rome. That he does make himself into an idol is certain. The first act that he performs after his election is to go into the Church of St. Peter, and there taking his seat upon the high altar to claim and receive adoration from the cardinals who kiss his feet. Among the medals struck in the Roman mint is one representing the cardinals kneeling before the Pope, with this inscription, *Quem creant, adorant.* Count Montalembert, in a letter written from his death-bed, February 28, 1870, protested against those votaries of the papacy who, as he says, " trample under foot all our liberties and principles, in order to immolate justice and truth, reason and history, as a sacrifice to the *idol* which they have set up for themselves in the Vatican."

CALVIN. *A Prayer:* Grant, Almighty God, that since thou hast hitherto so patiently endured, not only our sloth and folly but also our ingratitude and perverseness, — O grant, that we may hereafter render ourselves submissive and obedient to Thee; and as thou hast been pleased to set over us the best of Shepherds, even thine only begotten Son, cause us willingly to attend to Him, and to suffer ourselves to be gently ruled by Him; and though thou mayest find in us what may justly provoke thy wrath, yet restrain extreme severity, and so correct what is sinful in us, as to continue our Shepherd until we shall at length under thy guidance reach thy heavenly kingdom; and thus keep us in thy fold and under thy pastoral staff, that at last, being separated from the goats, we may enjoy that blessed inheritance which has been ordained for us by the blood of thy beloved Son. — Amen.

B. THE SECOND BURDEN.

CHAPTERS XII.-XIV.

The fresh title here prefixed sufficiently indicates that a new *pericope* begins with chapter xii. Its leading themes are the victory of God's kingdom over the heathen world (xii. 1-9), the repentance and conversion of the children of the kingdom (xii. 10; xiii. 1), their purification from all ungodliness (xiii. 2-6), a severe sifting of the flock consequent upon the smiting of the shepherd (xiii. 7-9), and the final tremendous conflict of the Church and the world, ending in the assured victory of the former (xiv.).

If our view of the First Burden be correct, it would seem to follow that the second begins where the first leaves off, and treats of events to follow the coming and rejection of Christ. There are indeed many particulars which suggest the struggle of the Maccabees as the subject of the former part of the twelfth chapter; but that has already been treated of in the ninth chapter with specific mention of Javan or Greece as the antagonist, and why should we have it renewed here? Why should the Prophet halt in his progress and go back over trodden ground? Moreover, the twelfth chapter expressly speaks in several places of the conflict as carried on not against one nation, but against all the peoples of the earth (see ver. 3). There is an aspect of universality of which no sign at all appears in the portion ix. 11 – x. 7. It is the heathen world against the covenant people. Where now are we to look for the outward reality corresponding to this inward vision of the Prophet? Manifestly there is nothing in the history of the literal, national Israel which approaches conformity to this vivid outline. Never did they not only resist their foes, but inflict such damage upon them as could be compared to the ravages of fire among wheat sheaves. The covenant people maintained their internal constitution and religious usages until the days of Titus, but in no case did they devour all nations roundabout on the right hand and the left. It only remains then to hold that the Prophet here passes from the old to the new form of the Church, that he refers to the kingdom of God on earth after the appearance of the Messiah, and describes its trials and triumphs, its inward and outward development.

But does he refer to events yet future, or may we trace a fulfillment of his words in the past? The latter seems the more probable. As there was a chronological advance in the previous oracle, it is natural to look for one here, and to consider that the Prophet refers to different stages in the progress of the Christian Israel. In this view the struggle and victory in xii. 1-9 can hardly have any other reference than to the persecutions of the heathen world. Judah invaded, Jerusalem besieged by the nations, and yet the attempt at overthrow not only foiled but recoiling in the ruin of those who made it, — what else can this be than the fierce and bloody onslaught of pagan power on the infant Church? Or if Zechariah intended to set it forth, in what other way could he in his historical relations conceive the issue and its result than the way in which it is given here? Nor is it of use to object that this is spiritualizing arbitrarily. The Christian Church is the legitimate continuation of the Old Testament Israel. There is but one Israel, one people of God from the beginning to the end. According to the

Apostle's figure, old branches were broken off and new ones grafted on, but there was only the one olive tree throughout. Gentiles when they come to Christ, are incorporated into the commonwealth of Israel, so as to become fellow-citizens with the saints, *i. e.*, those who are already such (Eph. ii. 12–19). It is one and the same body, differing in outward and unessential characteristics, but maintaining an unbroken identity in all that belongs to substance and life.

1. ISRAEL'S CONFLICT AND VICTORY.

Chapter XII. 1–9.

A. *Jehovah's continuous Agency in Nature* (ver. 1). B. *Jerusalem ruinous to her Besiegers* (vers. 2–4). C. *Energy of the Chiefs of Judah* (vers. 5–7). D. *Promise of growing Strength to the Feeble* (ver. 8). E. *Final Result* (ver. 9).

1 The burden of the word of Jehovah upon Israel,
Saith Jehovah who stretches[1] forth the heavens,
And lays the foundation of the earth,
And forms the spirit of man within him.
2 Behold I make Jerusalem a bowl[2] of reeling
To all the peoples[3] round about,
And upon Judah also shall it be[4]
In the siege against Jerusalem.
3 And it shall be in that day, I will make Jerusalem
A burdensome stone for all peoples,
All who lift it shall tear themselves;
And[5] all nations of the earth shall gather against it.
4 In that day, saith Jehovah,
I will smite every horse with terror,[6]
And his rider with madness,
And upon the house of Judah I will open my eyes,
And every horse of the peoples will I smite with blindness.
5 And the chiefs[7] of Judah shall say in their heart,
The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength[8]
In Jehovah of Hosts, their God.
6 In that day I will make the chiefs of Judah
As a pan[9] of fire among sticks of wood,[10]
And as a torch of fire in a sheaf,
And they shall devour on the right hand and on the left
All the peoples around,
And Jerusalem shall yet sit in her own place in Jerusalem.
7 And Jehovah shall save the tents of Judah first,[11]
That the glory of the house of David,
And the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem
May not exalt itself over Judah.
8 In that day will Jehovah defend[12] the inhabitant of Jerusalem,
And the stumbling[13] among them in that day shall be as David,
And the house of David as God,[14]
As the angel of Jehovah before them.
9 And it shall be in that day,
I will seek to destroy all the nations
That come against Jerusalem.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1.—Who *stretches*, *lays*, *forms*. The substitution of the preterite for the participle by some translators not only is gratuitous and inaccurate, but hides the allusion to the creative power of God as constantly exhibited in the continued existence of his works.

2 Ver. 2.—סַף. This word Hengstenberg, in the first edition of his *Christology* (followed by Moore), rendered *threshold*, but in the second, he returns to the old and better version *cup* or *bowl*.

3 Ver. 2.—עַמִּים. Here and in vers. 3, 4, 6, *peoples*. See on viii. 20.

4 Ver. 2. — The rendering of the second clause in the E. V. is impossible grammatically, and is sustained by no authority that I have seen.

5 Ver. 3. — וְנֶאֶ. It is possible but not necessary to render, as E. V., "though all," etc.

6 Ver. 4. — תִּמָּהוֹן. *Astonishment* hardly expresses the force of this word, which denotes a sort of wondering consternation.

7 Ver. 5. — אַלּוּף head of a family or tribe, is not well rendered as in E. V., by *prince*, which necessarily implies something of kingly rank or power. As a title of authority it is elsewhere in Scripture used only of the heads of the Idumean tribes (Gen. xxxvi. 15; Ex. xv. 15; 1 Chron. i. 51 ff.), whence Hengstenberg deduces an ingenious argument in favor of the genuineness of the second part of Zechariah (*Christology*, iv. 67), cf. on ix. 7.

8 Ver. 5. — אַמְצָה, ἅπ. λεγ. = אֹמֶץ. לִי is the dative of advantage, and the singular is used collectively as in vii. 8.

9 Ver. 6. — כִּיּוֹר, usually a basin for washing (the laver of the tabernacle, Ex. xxx. 18), here is a pot or pan for coals.

10 Ver. 6. — עֵצִים is not "woods" = forest, but sticks of wood or faggots.

11 Ver. 7 — The reading כְּבָרִאשֹׁנָה, adopted by LXX., Vulgate, and Peshito, and found in five MSS., is manifestly due to an attempt at correction.

12 Ver. 8. — יָגֵן used with another preposition in the same sense, in ix. 15.

13 Ver. 8. — נִּכְשָׁל, *feeble* (E. V.), is not so expressive as the literal, *stumbler*; cf. Ps. cv. 37, "And not a stumbler in his tribes". (Is. v. 27.)

14 Ver. 8. — אֱלֹהִים may here be used as an abstract plural, denoting what is divine and heavenly, or in general superhuman (cf. 1 Sam. xxviii. 13; Ps. viii. 6), — a view which seems to render more obvious the contrast between the two latter clauses of the verse. LXX. renders "house of God," which Luther follows, and which accounts for the Vulgate, "*et domus David quasi Dei.*"

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This chapter begins the second half of the last division of Zechariah's prophecies. It commences with the same word as does the portion chaps. ix.–xi., but in a different application. Both utterances are burdens, *i. e.*, threatening predictions. The former sets forth calamity as the portion of God's enemies, whether within or without the ranks of his covenant people. The latter represents the same as involving temporarily and partially his own chosen followers, but in the end these attain complete deliverance.

Ver. 1. **Burden.** See on ix. 1. עַל = *upon* or *concerning*, not *against*. The calamity involves Israel, but its full scope takes in the general body of the ungodly. **Israel** = the covenant nation, either in itself or as found in its true successor, the Christian Church. The Jewish interpreters, say the former, and with them many Christian critics agree (Theodoret, Calvin, a Lapide, Grotius, Vitringa, Bleek, etc.), while an equal number adopt the latter (Jerome, Cyril, Luther, Albertus Magnus, Coccejus, Marckius, Calmet, Hengstenberg). **Who stretches forth the heavens, ff.** For the purpose of allaying any possible doubt as to the fulfillment of the prophecy, there are added to Jehovah's name several striking expressions of his Almighty power (cf. Is. xlii. 5; Am. iv. 13; Ps. civ. 2–4). The Scriptures know nothing of the mechanical view of the universe as something from which God, after having created it, stands altogether aloof. "Every day He spreads out the heavens, every day He lays the foundation of the earth, which if it were not upheld by his power would wander from its orbit and fall into ruin" (Hengstenberg). The reference to God's formation of the human spirit is intended to suggest that unrestrained and continuous agency by which He controls the thoughts and purposes of men, and is able therefore to accomplish his own purposes through them, or in spite of them (cf. Num. xvi. 22; xxvii. 16; Ps. xxxiii. 15; Prov. xxi. 1.

Ver. 2. **Behold, I make . . . . round about.** A lively exhibition of the failure of the nations in their attack upon Jerusalem. Zechariah employs the figure common in the older Prophets, of representing Jehovah's wrath as a wine-cup which maddens and infatuates nations doomed to ruin. God will administer such a potion as will make them reel and fall in hopeless weakness and misery (cf. Ps. lxxv. 9, and Is. li. 17–22; Jer. xxv. 15–17). What elsewhere is כּוֹס = cup, here is סַף = basin or bowl, the latter being used, perhaps, because many were to drink of it at the same time. **And upon Judah also . . . . Jerusalem.** What is to be "upon Judah?" An old and wide-spread opinion says that it is a forced participation in the siege of the capital (Targum, Vulgate, Grotius, Marckius, and many later critics); but this is not required by the text, nor consistent with the context, which indicates union rather than opposition between the country and the capital. Others say, the bowl of reeling (Kimchi, Hitzig, Maurer, *et al.*), but this would require the preposition לְ instead of עַל. Köhler proposes to supply מָצוֹר as the subject, but this is forbidden by the awkward sentence it would make, and by the fact that only a city and not a land can be besieged. It is better to assume as the subject the substance of the previous clause, — what takes place at Jerusalem; and the meaning is that the country and the capital shall be involved in the same trial.

Ver. 3. **And it shall be . . . . a burdensome stone.** The Prophet employs another figure borrowed, according to the general opinion, from one of the sports of the young men in Palestine described by Jerome as still subsisting in his day. They who, overrating their strength, try to lift a stone too heavy for them, not only fail, but suffer sprains and dislocations. Such a fate will befall the foes of Jerusalem, *i. e.*, **all peoples, all the nations of the earth,** for so extensive is the combination against the holy city.

Ver. 4. **In that day . . . . blindness.** Horses and riders represent the warlike forces of the enemy. The terrifying and blinding of these makes them injurious only to themselves. **Upon Judah,**

on the contrary, which stands here for the whole nation, Jehovah says, **I will open my eyes**, *i. e.*, for protection (Ps. xxxii. 8 (Heb.), 1 Kings viii. 29; Neh. i. 6). Cowles justly calls attention to the beautiful antithesis. "God smites with blindness the warring powers of his foes, but opens his own eyes wide on his people, to see and provide for their wants." The three plagues mentioned are precisely those with which Moses threatened rebellious Israel in Deut. xxviii. 28: "The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart." A fine historical illustration of the effect of sudden blindness is seen in the history of Elisha (2 Kings vi. 18).

Ver. 5. **And the chiefs of Judah . . . . my strength.** That the leaders find their strength in the inhabitants of Jerusalem can mean only that the holy city, made such by the election of the Most High who dwells there, insures his protection for all who seek Him in the appointed way, and that even the most dignified and powerful have no other resource. A parallel sentiment is found in Ps. lxxxvii. 2: "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."

Ver. 6. **In that day . . . . in a sheaf.** In consequence of this trust in the divine election, the leaders consume their foes on every hand as a basin of fire devours faggots, or a torch burns up a ripe sheaf. The resulting preservation of the city is stated in the last clause, in which the first **Jerusalem** = the population personified as a woman, and the second = the material city as such. For the reverse condition, see Is. xlvii. 1.

Ver. 7. **And Jehovah shall save . . . Judah.** The word **tents** stands in contrast with fortified cities. These spread over the open country Jehovah will save *first*, in order that the well-defended capital may not lift itself above the defenseless land, but that both may acknowledge that "in either case the victory is the Lord's" (Jerome).

Ver. 8. **Will Jehovah defend . . . . angel of Jehovah.** The Lord will exalt his people to a degree of strength and glory far transcending anything in their past experience. This is expressed by saying that even **the stumbler**, one who can scarce hold himself up, much less attack a foe, shall become a hero like David; and even David's house shall exceed its highest fame of old, shall become like God, nay, **like the angel of Jehovah**, that peculiar manifestation of Deity which once marched at the head of the armies of Israel. This very striking and beautiful climax is of itself an answer to those who depreciate the literary merit of Zechariah. But the rhetorical excellence of the passage falls far below its consolatory and stimulating power as a promise. **Before them** (cf. Ex. xxxii. 34; xxiii. 20).

Ver. 9. **I will seek to destroy . . . . Jerusalem.** This does not mean to seek out in order to destroy, but is spoken, *more humano*, to express the energetic purpose of the speaker.

This prophecy is supposed by Vitringa, C. B. Michaelis, Dathe, and others, to refer to the dealings of God with the national Israel in the end of the world, in the last great struggle of ungodliness. It is manifestly easier to interpret the passage in its details upon this literal view of its application. And yet there is great improbability in such a view. Why should the prophet, after depicting so vividly the rejection of the Good Shepherd, and the consequent overthrow of the flock, pass at once to the final scene, overlooking all the splendid triumphs of the truth during the intervening period? Would we not naturally, from the case itself and from the usage of the other prophets, expect some allusion to the great changes in the development of the kingdom of God, and to its progressive increase among the nations of the earth? Moreover, if the national Israel are hereafter to be restored to their own land and to resume the old relations of capital and country, on what ground can we look for a consentaneous attack of all nations upon this one small people and territory? Can any imagination conceive the recurrence of a general movement, like that of the Crusades, precipitating the men and means of a continent, not to say a world, upon the sacred soil of Palestine? Of course, such a thing is possible, but in view of the vast changes in the current of human thought, in the economy of states and empires, in the ways in which races and dynasties seek to increase or perpetuate their influence, and in the distribution of political and social power, it is the most unlikely of all conceivable events. Were the Jews to-day in the possession of the Holy Land, and that whether converted or unconverted, what motive could there be for any existing nation or combination of nations to assail the seed of Abraham with fire and sword? If it be claimed that there will be a revival of the bloody propagandism of infidelity or atheism, as at one period of the French Revolution, why should such an outburst be directed against Jerusalem or Jewish believers rather than against the strongholds of the Gospel found among Gentile believers? Such an attack, if successful, would hardly affect more than an outpost of the Christian Church. The great body of the means and resources of evangelical Christendom would remain unimpaired. It is, therefore, more natural to consider this *pericope* as a general statement not only of the Christian Israel's victory over the first ten persecutions, but of the result of all its conflicts with the world's power as they are renewed from age to age.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The fundamental thought in the conception of God is that of Power. Alike in the Scriptures and in human experience we begin our view of the Most High with the fact of creation. In looking at the world around us we have an intuitive and irresistible conviction that this visible effect must have had an invisible cause, a cause adequate to its production. The universality of this conviction in all ages and lands, — rendered only the more striking by the occasional exceptions which history discloses, — entitles us to rest in it with absolute certitude. But the power which created the world must be unlimited. He who without an effort and by a simple volition called the universe into being, can do all things. To Him great and small, high and low, difficult and easy, are practically the same. All things are possible with God. But if He be infinite in this direction, He must be equally so in all others. What is there, what can there be, to limit any other aspect of his nature? Boundless power implies necessarily boundless wisdom and boundless goodness. A truncated Deity, perfect on one side, but imperfect on others, is inconceivable by us, or if the vain attempt be made to hold such an inconsequent view, the result is either Dualism or Polytheism.

Hence the perpetual recurrence in the Scriptures to this attribute of Jehovah. It is as necessary to our practice as to our theories. In all the course of the individual believer and of the Church at

large, there occur seasons when there is no other support for faith and hope than the divine omnipotence. We must look up to Him who stretcheth abroad the heavens and layeth the foundation of the earth and formeth the spirit of man within him. To feel that all things material and immaterial lie at his control as clay in the hands of the potter is a buttress of the believing soul. It sustains in the darkest hours of trial; it encourages in the endeavor after the most difficult enterprises.

> "It is a thought which ever makes
> Life's sweetest smiles from tears;
> It is a daybreak to our hopes,
> A sunset to our fears."

2. It is said that on one occasion when at a conference of Andrew Rivet with the king of France, the latter threatened some severe measures against the cause of truth, the sturdy reformer answered, "May it please your Majesty, the Church of God is an anvil which hath broken a great many hammers." It is even so. Zion is a burdensome stone, and always has been, to her assailants. They have harmed not her, but themselves. Pharaoh pursued the children of Israel and caught them "entangled in the land, shut in by the wilderness," but when he sought to spring the trap, they escaped in safety, while he and his host sank like lead in the mighty waters. The Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant, but no defeat was ever so damaging to Dagon or his worshippers as this seeming triumph. Babylon rioted in the plunder of Jerusalem, and the impious king turned the sacred vessels of the sanctuary into the drinking cups of an idolatrous revel, but the fingers of doom wrote upon the wall a sentence which numbered and finished his days the same night. Herod sought to slay the infant Redeemer, but while the child was safe in Egypt, the cruel king perished by a painful and loathsome disease. So in the bloody persecutions which attended the introduction of Christianity, one and another took up the Church as a stone to toss hither and thither, but in vain. The stone was unharmed, but the lifters were torn and lacerated. All were made to feel what the dying Julian uttered in his despair, "O Galilean, thou hast conquered!" Here, more than anywhere else, is fulfilled the saying of the devout Psalmist, "The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands" (ix. 16). Every assault upon Zion recoils upon the heads of its authors, and that not simply by virtue of "the elastic nature of right according to which every infliction calls forth a counter infliction;" but in consequence of the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God who taketh the wise in their own craftiness. Times without number has his providence justified the earnest counsel which Pilate's wife gave to the Roman governor in the great crisis of his life,— Have thou nothing to do with that just man.

3. Yet when Zion prevails over her foes, this result is not owing to any human or inherent strength, but to the presence and power of Jehovah. *I* make Jerusalem a bowl of reeling; *I* make her a burdensome stone; *I* smite every horse with blindness; *I* make the chiefs of Judah a pan of fire; *Jehovah* saves, *Jehovah* defends. Thus, throughout, the stress is laid upon the divine arm. This is the essential factor in the case. On human principles, or according to the ordinary operation of cause and effect, the world would prevail. Often every advantage is on its side; arms, wealth, influence, state-craft, learning, prestige, and numbers. Yet the few, the weak, the unlettered, the lowly, the things that are not, bring to nought the things that are. The reason is that the excellency of the power may be, and may be seen to be, not of man but of God. In all efforts of evangelization this truth is to be distinctly recognized and made prominent. For the Lord will not give his glory to another. The seer said to Asa (2 Chron. xiv. 8), "Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet *because thou didst rely upon the Lord,* He delivered them into thy hand."

4. There is something stimulating in the rich promise of growth contained in Jehovah's assurance to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (ver. 8). The stumbler, the man who can scarce hold himself up, much less make an assault upon the foe, shall be made a mighty man of valor like David. His feebleness and incapacity shall merge into the strength and skill of a hero, for the Lord shall teach the hands to war and the fingers to fight. Nor is this the end. Even a great captain like David shall surpass himself, shall reach a superhuman courage and decision. He shall resemble the manifested Jehovah as he marched at the head of his conquering host in the days of old. In the sphere of spiritual things this illustrious promise verifies itself. The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger. Faith gains by experience. Grace increases by exercise. The sapling which once bent with every blast and had but a precarious chance of life, ripens into a gnarled oak which spreads its branches far and wide and defies the storm. It is literally true that no degree of grace is impossible to him that believeth, for the Apostle's declaration, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," did not apply only to himself. The same provisions and promises are open to all Christians. He who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, perfects his strength in human weakness, and the trembling believer, following on to know the Lord, is lifted to a pitch of devotion or endurance or activity which once seemed as far away as the fixed stars.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

MOORE: *I will open mine eye,* etc. The promise of God is the best protection of his Church in the time of peril. He may seem to forget his people in their trouble, but it will be only a seeming oblivion, for at the proper time He will open his eyes upon them, and show them that He slumbers not nor sleeps. *That the glory . . . . do not magnify,* etc. The whole plan of God's dealings with man is to humble that pride, the root of which is selfishness, and the fruit of which is every form of sin.

PRESSEL: The affliction of the Church serves first for a chastisement of God's people, but then falls back in terror and shame upon the heads of their foes.

CALVIN: Though the Church may be grievously tried and exposed even to death, let us learn from this passage that they are miserable indeed who through fear or cowardice separate themselves from her, and that they who cast on God the care of their safety, shall be made blessed, though the whole world were mad against them, though the weapons of all nations were prepared for their ruin, and horses and riders assembled to overthrow them, for the defense of God is a sufficient protection.

2. REPENTANCE AND CONVERSION.

CHAPTERS XII. 10.–XIII. 1.

A. *A plentiful Effusion of the Spirit causes Men to look upon the Jehovah they have pierced, and Mourn bitterly* (ver. 10). B. *Greatness of the Mourning* (ver. 11). C. *Each Family mourns separately* (vers. 12–14). D. *A Provision for the Penitents* (ch. xiii. 1).

10 And I will pour out upon the house of David,
And upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
The Spirit [1] of grace and supplication, [2]
And they shall look upon me [3] whom they pierced,
And they shall mourn for him [4] as the mourning over an only one,
And be in bitterness [5] for him as one is in bitterness for the first-born.
11 In that day the mourning shall be great in Jerusalem,
Like the mourning of Hadadrimmon [6] in the valley of Megiddo.
12 And the land shall mourn, family by family apart,
The family of the house of David apart and their wives apart,
The family of the house of Nathan apart and their wives apart.
13 The family of the house of Levi apart and their wives apart,
The family of the Shimeite [7] apart and their wives apart.
14 All the remaining families,
Family by family apart and their wives apart.
Ch. xiii. 1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened
To the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
For sin and for uncleanness.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 10. — רוּחַ. Noyes and Henderson render "a spirit," but the absence of the article is compensated by the construct case (Green, *H. G.*, 246, 3).

2 Ver. 10. — חֵן וְתַחֲנוּנִים is rendered in E. V. "supplications," but as the word occurs only in the plural, it is doubtless to be regarded as singular in sense. The Genevan renders *compassion*, but usage is altogether in favor of the other meaning.

3 Ver. 10. — אֵלַי is to be preferred to אֵלָיו, because grammatically it is the more difficult reading; it is opposed to the favorite opinions of the Jews; it is found in all the ancient MSS., and found not only in the best of the later ones but in by far the largest number of them; and it is sustained by LXX., Aq., Symm., Theod., Syr., Targ., Vulg. and Arab.

4 Ver. 10. — עָלָיו cannot be rendered "on account of *it*," because עַל after סָפַד always denotes the person for whom mourning is made, and in all the following instances in this verse in which it occurs, the reference is undoubtedly to a person.

5 Ver. 10. — הָמֵר is best understood intransitively with its cognate finite verb. The E. V. is at once more literal and more emphatic than attempted emendations.

6 Ver. 11. — הֲדַדְרִמּוֹן. A ἅπ. λεγ. on which etymology throws no light.

7 Ver. 13. — הַשִּׁמְעִי = The Shimeite — a patronymic here just as in the corresponding case (Num. iii. 21).

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This passage presents a complete contrast to the one immediately preceding. The change is every way startling. There is not a word of war, or conflict, or victory, no reeling-cup for the nations, no torch among sheaves, no march of a hero at the head of conquering hosts. On the contrary, all is subjective, subdued, spiritual. It is a picture of penitence as vivid and accurate as any found anywhere in the Scriptures. The people are seen standing alone in their relation to Him whom they have rejected, and meditating upon the character of their great crime. One thought occupies all minds, one feeling pervades all hearts. The experience of their great ancestor recorded in the 51st Psalm is renewed on a broad scale, and a great sorrow spreads over the community, the intensity of which is likened on one hand to that occasioned by the sorest domestic affliction, and on the other to that of a great public calamity felt to be at once universal and irreparable. Each tribe and family goes apart to weep in silence and solitude over the grievous infliction. What now is the nexus between this passage and that which precedes? It seems to be this. As the former portion of the chapter set forth the outward protection of Providence shown toward the New Testament Israel, by means of which it emerged victor from all trials and con-

flicts, and saw its enemies utterly discomfitted, this portion turns to the other side of Israel's experience and deals with its inward character, showing how the covenant people become such, how the Church in its new form commences the Christian life, and obtains a title to the divine protection. It is by the bitter herbs of repentance, leading to pardon and renovation through a believing sight of the pierced Saviour, — the whole preceded and induced by a copious shower of spiritual influences of the same kind as those predicted by Joel (ii. 28), Isaiah (xliv. 3; xxxii. 15). In this view the two parts of the chapter correspond to each other and make one complete whole. The result of the failure of the shepherd in ch. xi. is shown to be not final and absolute, but a link in the chain of events which works out the fulfillment of the old covenant promises, and the ingathering of all the Israel of God.

A vast spiritual blessing is promised. It begins in the outpouring of a gracious Spirit, which produces an intense and wide-spread penitential sorrow, and this again is followed by purification and forgiveness.

Ver. 10. **And I pour out . . . . supplication.** The house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem, here and in xiii. 1, stand for the whole covenant people, according to a usage by which the capital represents the nation (ii. 2; viii. 8). The mention of the royal house indicates that all ranks from the highest to the lowest need and shall receive the promised gift. The "pouring out" rests upon the earlier passage (Joel ii. 28), and differs from it in defining more minutely the character of the effusion. It is **a spirit of grace and supplication,** which is abundantly bestowed. חֵן is not = prayer (Gesenius, Noyes), nor love (Ewald), but grace or favor. The Spirit of grace then is the Spirit which brings grace (cf. Heb. x. 29). It produces in the mind of man the experience of the grace of God, and this experience rousing the sense of sin and guilt, naturally leads to "supplication;" and this in turn suggests the looking spoken of. הִבִּיט is applied both to bodily and mental vision, and not unfrequently with the idea of confidence in the object beheld (Num. xxi. 9; Is. xxxii. 11; li. 1). The phrase, **upon me,** must refer to Jehovah, for according to ver. 1 He is the speaker throughout. The אֵת before אֲשֶׁר, as usual defines more clearly the accusative, and thus renders impossible the rendering of Kimchi, *because*. Ewald and Bunsen prefer the reading of a number of MSS, *upon him* instead of *upon me;* but the authority for the received text is overwhelming, and on every critical ground it is to be adopted (see Text. and Gram.). The other reading seems to have arisen from an attempt to correct the Hebrew on the ground that it was impossible that God could actually be pierced, — an objection which of course falls away at once when the doctrine of the Incarnation is received. **Whom they pierced.** דָּקָרוּ was rendered by the LXX. *κατωρχήσαντο*, *reviled*, or *insulted*, probably because they thought the literal meaning of the word unsuitable, since they similarly avoided it in rendering xiii. 3, where the E. V. has, "His father and his mother shall *thrust him through*." Several Christian critics have adopted this as the figurative meaning of the verb, and translated or expounded accordingly (Theodore of Mopsuestia, Calvin, Grotius, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Maurer); but entirely without reason, for in every other case the word is confessedly used in its literal sense (Judg ix. 45; 1 Sam. xxxi. 4; Zech. xiii. 3); and the prodigious mourning subsequently mentioned, with the comparisons by which it is set forth, the loss of an only son or a first-born, and the wail over the good king Josiah, presupposes the occurrence of a literal death. But the point is put beyond question by the Apostle John, who after recounting the act of the soldier who pierced the Saviour's side, adds (xix. 37), "Another Scripture saith, They shall look on Him whom they pierced;" of course not meaning that this one act of the soldier exhausted the meaning of the prophecy, but that it was *a* fulfillment of it. The change of person in the quotation — *him whom* for *me whom*, — is due simply to the fact that in the Prophet it is Messiah Himself who is speaking, while in the Gospel John speaks of Him. Matthew makes a similar change of person in his quotation (xxvii. 9). The remainder of the verse describes the result which is to follow from this looking to the pierced One. **And they shall mourn.** The object of this verb is put not in the first person, as we should expect, but in the third, **for him;** but such an enallage of person is not uncommon in Hebrew. See any of the grammars for examples. That the pronoun is to be in the masculine and not in the neuter (Gousset, Schultens, etc.), see in Text. and Gramm. **Mourning over an only son,** is of course a sign of the deepest sorrow (cf. Amos viii. 10). Similar is the death-wail over a **first-born,** of which the great instance is found in the last of Egypt's ten plagues (Ex. xi. 6). There was an incipient fulfillment of this prophecy in the fact mentioned by Luke (xxiii. 48), that at Christ's crucifixion, "all the people . . . . smote their breasts." (The primary meaning of סָפַד is to *strike*, especially on the breast). But the true fulfillment began when the multitudes at Pentecost were *pricked to the heart* (Acts ii. 37).

Ver. 11. **The mourning shall be great, ff.** The Prophet furnishes an historical illustration of the greatness of the mourning. The reference is generally supposed to be to the lamentation over Josiah, who was mortally wounded "in the valley of Megiddo" (2 Chron. xxxv. 22). Hadadrimmon appears to have been a city in this valley, and Jerome speaks of such a city as still existing in his day, although he says that its name had been altered to Maximinopolis. Josiah was a king of Judah, a pious king, and one whose death was lamented in an extraordinary manner (2 Chron. xxxv. 25). There is no need to seek for other applications of the text, such as the absurd reference of the Targum to the death of Ahab, who could not have been mourned at all, much less, generally or bitterly; or the impious suggestion of the heathen weeping for Thammuz or Adonis (Movers, Hitzig); or the frivolous notion of Pressel, that the allusion is to Sisera's mother (Judg. v. 28), as mentioned in the Song of Deborah! Equally frivolous are Pressel's objections to the common view, namely, (1) That Josiah did not die in Megiddo but on the way to Jerusalem, where he was buried and lamented; (2) that he, being now a man of nearly forty years of age, could not properly be spoken of as a first-born or only son! Hengstenberg, on the contrary, states well the reasons why just he should be introduced here as a type of the Messiah. "He was slain on account of the sins of the people; his reign was the closing manifestation of mercy on the part of the Lord; unspeakable

misery followed immediately afterwards; the lamentation for his death rested upon the mingled feelings of love, and of sorrow for their own sins as the cause of his death."

A still more elaborate description of the mourning is given in the next three verses.

Vers. 12-14. **And the land shall mourn, ff.** Not only the capital, but the whole land shall mourn, and this not only in gross but in detail, every family and every subdivision of a family apart. The mention of the **wives apart** is not to be explained from the habit of the women in all lands "to go into mourning" (Pressel), but simply as a further specification of the intensity and universality of the mourning. The mention of **David** and **Levi** is easily understood, as these were heads respectively of the royal and priestly lines. The other two names are not so clear. The old Jewish view supposed **Nathan** to refer to the prophetic order, and **Shimeite** to the teachers, who were said to have sprung from the tribe of Simeon; but Shimeite is not the patronymic of Simeon, but Shimeonite; nor is there any evidence that that tribe furnished teachers for the nation, and Nathan the prophet was not the head of any order. It is better to adopt the view (Hengstenberg, Henderson, Keil, Köhler) first stated by Luther: "Four families are enumerated, two from the royal line under the names of David and Nathan (son of David), and two from the priestly line, Levi and his grandson Shimei; after which he embraces all together." Thus he mentions one leading family and one subordinate branch, to show that the grief pervades all, from the highest to the lowest. **All the remaining families.** Not those that are left after the judgment (Neumann), nor the less renowned (Köhler), nor as implying that some families shall have become extinct (Henderson); but simply the remainder after those which have just been specified by way of example. This penitential grief will not be in vain.

Ch. xiii. 1. **There shall be a fountain opened, ff.** This verse resumes and completes the process begun in verse 10 of the preceding chapter. It treats of the same parties, — **the house of David and the inhabitant of Jerusalem,** standing here as there for the whole nation. He who poured out the spirit of supplication will also provide the means of purification from sin. A fountain is shut up as long as it remains under ground, or is sealed from access (Cant. iv. 12); it is opened when it breaks forth and flows freely. The reference appears to be to a twofold usage in the Mosaic ritual; one, the sprinkling of the Levites at their consecration with "water of purifying," *lit.*, sin-water, *i. e.*, for purification from sin (Num. viii. 7), and the other the sprinkling of persons contaminated by contact with death, with the water prepared from the ashes of the red heifer, called the water of uncleanness, *i. e.*, which removed uncleanness. In both these cases the impurity denoted the defilement of sin, and the outward purification was a symbol of the inward. So the water which flows from the fountain in the text, is a water of sprinkling by which **sin and uncleanness** are removed. It does not need to be renewed from time to time, as was the case with the Levitical waters, but issues from a living well-spring. The meaning cannot be a new water supply for the metropolis (Pressel), nor even grace in general (Köhler), nor the grace of baptism, as the older critics said; but is the blood which cleanseth from all sin (1 John i. 7), the blood of that sacrifice which was typified in the sin-offering of the red heifer, the blood which removes alike the guilt and the dominion of sin.

Excursus on xii. 10. The history of the interpretation is interesting.

I. Among the Jews the early opinion was in favor of the Messianic interpretation. Thus in the Gemara of Jerusalem, it is said, "there are two different opinions as to the meaning of this passage. Some refer it to the lamentation for the Messiah; others to the mourning for sin." Both concurred in thinking of a dying Messiah, but one thought directly of Him and his suffering, the other of the sin which caused his death, directly or indirectly. The former took עָלָיו as a masculine suffix, the latter as neuter. In contrast to this the Gemara of Babylon maintains the personal application of the passage, but says that it refers to Messiah ben Joseph who is to suffer and die, while Messiah ben Judah is always to live. And this convenient fiction of two Messiahs was subsequently adopted by Aben Ezra and Abarbanel, the latter of whom confessed that his chief object was to remove the stumbling-block interposed by Christians when they interpreted the prophecy, as relating to the crucified One. Kimchi and Jarchi denied any Messianic reference. They said that there was a change of subject, and either adopted the false reading *upon him* instead of *upon me*, or translated the following word *because* instead of *whom*, so that they interpreted, "the pierced One" = every one who had been slain in the war with Gog and Magog, and said, "they will all lament for the death of one as if the whole army had been slain." But this view is its own refutation. The translators of the LXX. had the same text as we have, but gave the sense *vex* instead of *pierce*, because they could not see the relevancy of the literal meaning. Some consideration of the same kind operated upon the Chaldee paraphase, which renders "they shall pray before me because they have been carried away (or have wandered about)." The modern Jews, however, generally adhere to the literal sense of the verb ד־ר, and explain it in the method proposed by Kimchi, rejecting either expressly or tacitly the notion of a double Messiah.

II. Among Christians the reference to Christ was adopted without dissent by the early expositors and most of the Reformers. Strange to say, the first exception is found in Calvin, who understood the passage as referring to God, who is figuratively said to have been pierced, *i. e.*, irritated and provoked by the Jews. He, however, held that as Christ is God, manifest in the flesh, what happened to Him was a visible symbol of the substance of the prophecy, and therefore was justly cited by John as its fulfillment. This view was warmly repudiated by Calvin's contemporaries, and followed only by Grotius, and some Socinian writers. Later writers applied the words to some distinguished Jewish leader or martyr. Jahn suggested Judas Maccabæus, and rendered, "they will look upon Him (Jehovah) on account of Him whom they have pierced." Baur thought it was impossible to determine which of the leaders it was, but it was one of those who had lost their lives in the service of the true God. Bleek adopted the same view, and to get rid of the reference to Jehovah, substituted for אֵלַי, אֱלֵי the poetic form of אֶל, and rendered "they look to Him whom

they pierced." This is simply desperate, for אֲלֵי occurs only four times in the Old Testament, and these are all in the Book of Job, and immediately before a noun, and as it is here in the construct state, it cannot possibly be joined to the accusative אֵת. Besides, this view fails to account for the universal mourning or the opened fountain.— Ewald, for one martyr substitutes a plurality of such as had fallen in the war with the heathen. He renders "they look to Him whom men have pierced," thus changing the text and assuming another subject for the verb, and explains thus, "the intention is to show that no martyr falls in vain, but will one day be mourned with universal love." But this is opposed to the religious tone of the first clause, grace and supplication, and to the fact that in both the preceding chapter and the following, only *one* person is spoken of as an object of persecution. Hofmann, after giving up his first view of a plural object, adopted another according to which he rendered, "My heroes look at Him whom men have pierced." But אֵל never means *hero* (see Fürst, *sub voce*), and besides, הִבִּיט is usually construed with the preposition אֶל. Nor does the sense he thus obtains at all suit the connection. An altogether different view has been adopted by Vogel and Hitzig, whom Pressel for substance follows, namely, that the Prophet speaks of himself whom he identifies with Jehovah. "The murder of a Prophet is regarded as an attack upon Jehovah himself." The statement of this view is enough to show its untenableness. For although the sender and the sent are often identified, yet no instance can be found in Scripture, among all its records of martyrdom, of a case in which the death of a prophet is represented or mourned for as if it were the death of Jehovah. Noyes, in his *Translation of the Hebrew Prophets* (ii. 387), first mentions Calvin's explanation,[1] and then adds, "Or the meaning may be that the people *pierced* Jehovah, when they recently put to death some one of his messengers or prophets who is not named." But the violent death of a prophet was not such a rare thing in Jewish history; and why should it in any case lead to such a great and universal mourning as is here described? Or, if there had been some murder of a prophet so exceptional in its atrocity as to convulse the whole nation in an agony of grief, would there not be some trace of the fact in the books of Kings or Chronicles? Yet none such is found.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. When our Lord was about to ascend to heaven He commanded the Apostles (Acts i. 4) not to allow themselves to be drawn or driven from Jerusalem, but to "wait for the promise of the Father." There can scarcely be a doubt that the passage before us contains one form or instance of the promise to which the Saviour referred. The first great gift of heaven, for which men were taught to look in the latter days, was a divine person incarnate to make reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness; the next one was that of another divine person whose influences should apply the redemption effected, and thus complete the work of the Father's sovereign love. The latter—the Holy Spirit—had of course been present and active in the previous stages of the Church's history; otherwise there could have been no Church, for the Spirit is the indispensable bond of union between God and his people. But during the old economy, owing to its very nature as an introductory, preparatory, and restricted dispensation, the gifts of the Spirit were far less rich and powerful and general and constant, than they were ultimately designed and required to be in order to effect the purposes of grace. Hence the promise of an effusion which should not be intermittent or partial, either in its nature or its subjects, but every way adequate to the necessities of the case. This promise was given by the older Prophets, Joel (ii. 28, 29), Isaiah (lix. 21), Jeremiah (xxxi. 33, 34), Ezekiel (xxxvi. 27), and is now resumed after the exile by Zechariah, who uses the very term (שָׁפַךְ = pour out) employed by Joel three centuries before. (Isaiah uses a different word, יָצַק, but of the same signification.) The effusion is not to be fitful or scanty, but generous and abundant, a pouring rain from the skies, overcoming all obstacles, reaching all classes and effecting the most blessed and durable results. Its precise influence as conceived by Zechariah, is in the way of overcoming depraved natural characteristics by imparting grace and developing this grace in the exercise of supplication. All true and successful prayer is "in the Spirit" (Eph. vi. 18, Jude 20). Paul had often gone through the forms of supplication in his unconverted career, but it was only when spiritually enlightened that it could be truly said of him, as it was, "Behold, he prayeth" (Acts ix. 11). In the view of a thoughtful mind, prayer itself is hardly so great a blessing as the promise of a divine Spirit to help our infirmity and make intercession within us. (Rom. viii. 26.)

2. This passage is singularly happy in pointing out what all experience has shown to be the chief means of kindling evangelical repentance,—the apprehension of a crucified Saviour. Men are indeed convinced of sin in various ways. Natural conscience sometimes inflames remorse to a fearful pitch. Sudden judgments, or what are thought to be such, stimulate fear until reason is eclipsed. A keen sense of shame proves to be a sorrow of the world which worketh death. But the true, healthy conviction of sin, the repentance which needeth not to be repented of, is born at the cross. There the sinful soul sees its sin as it sees it nowhere else in the world, sees all the vileness, malignity, and inexcusableness of its past life, and is thoroughly humbled and prostrated in contrition. It becomes conscious of its own share in the dark and bloody crime of Calvary. As one of those for whom Christ died, it had part in driving the nails and pushing the spear, and is justly liable to the aggravated doom of those who with wicked hands crucified the Lord of glory. Hence all pleas in extenuation are given up, all excuses are felt to be frivolous. Nothing is left but a fearful looking for of judgment, so far as the soul's own merits and claims are considered. But this very conviction of total unworthiness is accompanied with a conviction of Christ's wondrous love in bearing the cross, and an inspiration of hope in the efficacy of his atoning death. Thus the arrow that kills bears with it the balm that makes alive. The true penitent says, "I am lost, for my sins have slain my Lord; nay, I am saved, for my Lord died that those very sins should be blotted out." So the re-

1 So far as I have observed, every writer of whatever school is glad to get the sanction of this great name for his opinion.

pentance is real, deep, and hearty, but it is not sullen, angry, or despairing. It grows keener and more comprehensive by experience, but faith and hope are growing in like measure, and thus the equipoise in which the spiritual life began is maintained even to the end. Even at the height of his usefulness Paul felt that he was not worthy to be called an Apostle, and at the close of life called himself chief of sinners; yet he knew whom he had believed, and expected a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, would give him "in that day."

3. There are two striking peculiarities of penitential sorrow, — its depth and its solitariness. The Prophet uses the strongest metaphors known to human experience. No pang which death can inflict is so severe as that which wrings the heart of parents following to the tomb the remains of a first-born or an only son. It seems as if all hope and joy were interred in the same grave. So again a great national calamity is intensified by the reciprocal influence upon one another of all who are affected by it. When President Lincoln was assassinated in 1865, a shuddering horror seized every heart throughout the land, and multitudes who had never seen the kindly leader were as deeply moved as if the blow had fallen on their own kindred. A gloomy pall settled down over all hearts and all households. But penitential grief which is awakened by the sight of a pierced Saviour is as real and pervading as that which proceeds from any outward affliction, personal, domestic, or national. Its theatre is within. There are no outward manifestations, but the feeling for that reason is the more concentrated and intense. The soul renews the experience of the royal penitent, — my sin is ever before me. But the stricken soul mourns *apart*. As there is a joy, so there is a sorrow, with which a stranger intermeddleth not. The relations of the soul to God are so delicate that all shrink instinctively from exposing them to the view of others. Deep grief is necessarily solitary. In its acmé, neither sympathy nor fellowship is sought or allowed. Much more must this be the case when the grief is spiritual, for the hand of God which causes the pain alone can cure it, and the soul nauseates all other comforters. David Brainerd mentions that on one occasion when he was preaching to his Indians, the power of God came down among them like a mighty rushing wind · "Their concern was so great, each for himself, that none seemed to take any notice of those about him. They were, to their own apprehension, as much retired as if they had been alone in the thickest desert. Every one was praying apart, and yet all together." Cowper is not the only penitent who could say in truth, —

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd."

The immediate prompting of all who become convinced of sin is to fly to some solitary place and be alone with God, unless indeed, as in the case of Brainerd's Indians, the absorption of mind is so complete that they are insensible to the presence of others. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness," and a godly sorrow shuns companions until it has wrought "a repentance unto salvation not to be repented of" (2 Cor. vii. 10).

4. Repentance of itself, however deep and thorough, is of no avail toward justification. It does not repair the evils of wrong-doing even in common life, any more than in the sphere of religion. The spendthrift may bitterly mourn the extravagance which ate up his estate, or the debauchee the excesses which ruined his constitution, but in neither case does the penitence bring back what has been lost. It is the same with the sinner. Tears and penances are no compensation for sin. Sin is a debt (Matt. vi. 12), and a debt is satisfied only by payment. The payment may be made by one person or by another, but it must be made, or sin remains with its legal and endless consequences. Hence the fullness of this passage of the Prophet, which to a most elaborate painting of the distress for sin caused by a believing apprehension of the cross, appends the true and only source of relief for that distress, — the fountain set flowing on Calvary. There must be aid from without. A continuous baptism of tears is of itself impotent. Nothing avails but a provision by the Being whom sin has offended, and just this is furnished in that blood of sprinkling which was symbolized in so many ways in the Old Covenant. Apart from this, nothing is left for a conscious sinner but despair.

5. A striking expression of this is given in two passages in the New Testament, evidently founded upon the words of Zechariah. In Matt. xxiv. 30, our Lord says, "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." In Rev. i. 7 the beloved disciple resumes these words with an additional particular, "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." All men are to see Christ, not merely in his glory but as bearing the scars by which that glory was won. Some see Him so as to be subdued into a salutary contrition; they are drawn to Him by irresistible attraction, and while they mourn over sin rejoice in the ample and gracious pardon He bestows. Others, alas, are to see Him, not voluntarily but by a necessity which they would fain escape! They see Him a lamb as it had been slain, but no more within their reach and for their advantage. He is to them a lost Saviour, one whose pierced side and mangled limbs express only the fearful wages and terrible iniquity of sin, but offer no hope of forgiveness and acceptance.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Moore: All true repentance arises from a sight of a dying Saviour, one who has died for us. True repentance is only love weeping at the foot of the cross, the soul sorrowing for sins that have been so freely forgiven. True religion is a personal thing, and when it takes strong hold of the heart, will lead the soul apart to solitary wrestling with God and acts of personal humbling before Him.

Bradley: Holy mourning for sin is a bitter thing; there comes along with it many a tear and pang; but yet there is mingled with it a comfort and a blessedness which must be felt to be known. The very look which makes the heart bleed, is a look at One who can do more than heal it. . . . Pray for this sorrow. When would you mourn and weep for your sins, if not now? Somewhere you must weep for them; would you keep back this weeping till you come to that world where tears are never dried up; where you must weep, if you weep at all, forever? And somewhere you must look upon this pierced Jesus? Will you look on Him for the first time when He opens the heavens and calls you out of your graves to his judg-

ment-seat? It is a blessed though a mournful thing to see Him now, but it is a dreadful thing to see Him for the first time in the very moment when his work of mercy is forever ended, when the fountain He has opened for sin and uncleanness is forever closed.

McCheyne: 1. The Great *Spring*. I will pour. 2. The Great *Agent*. The spirit of grace and supplication. 3. The *Effect*. They look; they mourn; they see the fountain opened.

Jay: There were provisions for ceremonial pollution under the Mosaic Economy, the brazen sea for the priests and the ten lavers for the things offered in sacrifice. There were also fountains for bodily diseases: the pool of Siloam to which our Saviour sent the man born blind; and the pool of Bethesda, where lay a number of sufferers waiting for the troubling of the waters. Christ differed from all these, as a fountain for moral and spiritual defilement, "for sin and uncleanness."

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4. FRUITS OF PENITENCE.

Chapter XIII. 2–6.

A. *The Extinction of Idols and False Prophets* (ver. 2). B. *The Latter to be slain by their own Parents* (ver. 3). C. *Other such Prophets shall be ashamed of their Calling* (ver. 4). D. *And even deny it when charged upon them* (vers. 5, 6.)

2 And it shall be in that day, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
I will cut off the names of the idols from the land,[1]
And they shall be remembered no more;
And also the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness,
Will I cause to pass out of the land.
3 And it shall be, if a man still prophesy,
His father and his mother, who begat him, shall say to him,
Thou shalt not live,
For thou hast spoken a lie in the name of Jehovah;
And his father and his mother, who begat him,
Shall pierce[2] him through in his prophesying.
4 And it shall be in that day the prophets shall be ashamed[3]
Each of his vision in his prophesying;
And shall no more put on a hairy mantle to lie;
5 And [one] shall say,[4] I am not a prophet, I am a husbandman,
For a man has sold[5] me from my youth.
6 And [the other] shall say[6] to him,
What then are these wounds between thy hands?
And he shall say, Those with which I was wounded
In the house of my lovers.[7]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 2. — הָאָרֶץ. Henderson in both cases renders *earth*, but needlessly. The statement is a general one, but with a local coloring.

2 Ver. 3. — דקר is rendered *pierce*, in order to show that it is the same word which is used in the famous passage xii. 10.

3 Ver. 4. — Heng. renders בּוֹשׁ מִן, to *desist with shame*, but the established meaning of the phrase is simply, to *be ashamed of*. The fem. suffix in הִנָּבְאֹתוֹ is a peculiarity of this class of verbs (Green, *Heb. Gr.*, 166, 2).

4 Ver. 5. — The singular verb here, following the previous plurals, indicates that one case is selected as an example. Noyes renders, "each shall say," but the prophet can scarcely mean that every one of the false prophets is to make the same form of denial.

5 Ver. 5. — הִקְנַנִי has been strangely misconceived. LXX. make it *ἐγέννησεν*; Vulg., *Adam meum exemplum*; Pesch. renders as if it came from קָנָא. The E. V. followed Kimchi in deriving the verbal form from מִקְנֶה = small cattle.

6 Ver. 6. — The implied subject of "shall say" is, of course, the other interlocutor in the dialogue.

7 Ver. 6. — מְאַהֲבַי should be rendered *lovers*, just as it is in all the other places where it occurs: Lam. i. 19, Hosea ii. 7, 9, 12, etc.; *friends* is too weak.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This portion announces the complete extirpation of idolatry and false prophecy, which are here taken to represent all forms of ungodliness and immorality, which they could very properly do, since they had been the chief and most dangerous sins of the covenant people in all their previous history. We have then a vivid presentation of the fruits of the penitence mentioned in the previous chapter, and of the conversion and renovation announced in the opening verse of this chapter. The passage is not to be restricted to any particular period, but describes under local and temporary forms the removal of whatever is offensive to a God of holiness and truth. It will therefore apply to every instance in which the Gospel in its leading elements, repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, is truly received.

Ver. 2. **I will cut off the names of the idols.** The expressions, "to cut off the names," and "that they be remembered no more," denote the total extinction of idolatry (cf. Hos. ii. 17). Of the latter Calvin says, "his meaning is that the hatred of superstition will be so great that the people will shudder at the very name." Inasmuch as the Jews notoriously after the Captivity shrank from any approach to idol-worship, it has been claimed that this passage shows that the portion of the book to which it belongs was composed prior to the Exile. But the conclusion is not legitimate. Zechariah simply uses the forms of the past in which to depict the future. Idolatry was the common expression of ungodliness in the earlier days of the nation; how could even a *post-exilium* prophet better set forth the overthrow of false religion in the future than by predicting the oblivion of idols and their names? Köhler indeed deems it possible, on the basis of Rev. ix. 20, xiii. 4, 15, that gross actual idol-worship may again return, but this would be to interpret an obscure book by one yet obscurer. Possibly the reference may be to that refined idolatry which consists in regarding and serving the creature more than the Creator, and which the New Testament has in view when it declares covetousness to be idolatry (Col. iii. 5). **The prophets** must of course be false prophets who spoke without authority, as appears from their association not only with idols but also with the **spirit of uncleanness.** This latter phrase denotes not merely a pervading principle, but an active, conscious agency, standing in direct contrast with the Spirit of grace (xii. 10), which works in its human instruments and leads them to their lying utterances. The false prophets as well as the true were subject to an influence from without (cf. 1 Kings xxii. 21–23, Rev. xvi. 14 with 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10 and 1 Tim. iv. 2). The completeness of the removal of this form of ungodliness is expressed very energetically in the following verses.

Ver. 3. **If a man still prophesy. . . . pierce him through.** Some infer from the opening words that the mere fact of prophesying will be proof that the man attempting it is a deceiver, since there will be no more prophets (Keil, Köhler), and they refer to Jer. xxxi. 33, 34, Is. liv. 13; but this is an extravagant and needless assumption, for the connection shows plainly enough that Zechariah has in view simply false pretenders to divine inspiration, and the passages quoted by no means imply the final cessation of the spirit of prophecy either in its broad or its narrow sense, as the New Testament plainly shows. The statement in the text rests on Deut. xviii. 20, compared with xiii. 6–10. The offender shall die, and the first to inflict the sentence shall be **his father and his mother**, here made more emphatic by the addition, **who begat him.** Cf. 2 Sam. xvi. 11. Several expositors modify the meaning of דָּקַר so as to make it = to *bind* or *scourge* (LXX., Peshito, Calmet), but there is no ground whatever for this in the origin or usage of the word, nor does it suit the context.

Ver. 4. **Prophets shall be ashamed . . . . to lie.** The revolution will be so great that these pretenders shall become ashamed of their claims, and strip off the outward token of their occupation. The **hairy mantle** worn by the prophets (2 Kings i. 8) was not a form of ascetic discipline, but a *sermo propheticus realis*, a symbol of the prophet's grief for the sins which he was commissioned to reprove. It was an acted parable of repentance. The same remark is true of John the Baptist's "raiment of camel's hair and leathern girdle" (Matt. iii. 4). **To lie**, *i. e.*, to give themselves the appearance of prophets, and thus impose upon the people. Thus far Zechariah has spoken of those who spoke falsely in the name of the Lord, and Hengstenberg supposes that he now turns to another class of pretenders who spoke in the name of strange gods, — a view which seems required by his interpretation of the last word of ver. 6. But no break or transition is apparent in the passage, and there is no necessity for violently introducing a new subject.

Vers. 5, 6. **I am not a prophet . . . . lovers.** A dramatic representation of the means by which one of these deceivers endeavors to escape detection. Charged with his crime, he denies it, and claims to have been nothing more than a common tiller of the soil. In support of this claim he asserts that this is no recent circumstance, but that he has been **sold** from his youth. קָנָה = to *acquire*, h. *buy* (Is. xxiv. 2), in Hiphil would naturally = to cause to buy, *i. e.*, to *sell*. Fürst and others make Hiphil the same as Kal. The sense is the same according to either rendering. There seems to be no reason for considering the verb a *denominative* from מִקְנֶה, *servum facere* (Maurer, Köhler). To this denial is opposed the question as to the origin of the scars the accused person bears, — wounds **between thy hands**, *i. e.*, upon the breast. Cf. 2 Kings ix. 24, where "between the arms" evidently has this meaning. (In Arabic the cognate phrase, بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ, occurs frequently, in the sense *coram eo.*) The questioner considers these gashes upon the person as palpable evidences that the man has wounded himself in connection with idolatrous worship (1 Kings xviii. 28; Tibullus, I. i. 43, respecting the worship of Cybele), and asks an explanation. The reply is that he received them in the house of his **lovers**, which some explain as = impure, sinful lovers, *i. e.*, *idols* (Hengstenberg), in which sense they say that the Piel of אָהַב is always used (which, however, cannot be affirmed of Jer. xxii. 20, 22, Lam. i. 19); but as the form necessarily signifies only intense affection without regard to quality, I prefer the opinion of those who explain it as = loving friends, and understand the accused person as maintaining that the scars are simply the result of chastisements which he had formerly received when in the house of his relatives. It seems more likely that such a man would resort to an evasion of this kind than that

he would make the frank confession involved in the former view.

"This verse is commonly applied to the sufferings of Christ, but without any further ground than its mere proximity to that which follows, in which He and his sufferings are clearly predicted" (Henderson). It is quite impossible on any critical ground to vindicate such an application, although Henderson is far astray when he assigns as a reason that "in no tolerable sense could the Jews be called Christ's lovers or friends," for it is written (John i. 11), "He came unto his own, and his own (οἱ ἴδιοι) received Him not," and the Apostle (Rom. ix. 5) speaks of his kinsmen as those "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came."

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. Idolatry and divination are mentioned by Zechariah, as has been said, only as typical forms of error and sin. But it is singular how well they express the prevailing evils with which the Church is called to contend in modern times. The gross idolatry of the heathen has disappeared from Christendom never to return; but its place is taken by a more refined and more dangerous error of the same sort. There is a devotion rendered to wealth, to pleasure, to position, to genius, which is wholly inconsistent with the just claims of our Maker. There is a materialism which, although glozed over with high-sounding names, is as repulsive to the true honor of God as the worship of Baal or Astarte. It dwells on great physical achievements, discoveries in nature or inventions in art, scientific triumphs, or even the multiplication of social conveniences, as if these were the all in all of life and of man. The next world is ignored. God is turned into a mere name. He is not enough thought of to be actively opposed; and men say in Gibbon's famous formula, all religions are equally true in the eyes of the people, equally false in the eyes of the philosopher, and equally useful in the eyes of the statesman. Now this cool indifference, this pervading earthliness of character and pursuit, is not simply the rejection of God, but the enthronement of something else in his place, *i. e.*, idolatry. And it needs all the energy of a true spiritual faith to overcome it. If the Church is ever to fulfill her function, she must insist that the life is more than meat and the body than raiment; that means are not ends; that man is not merely an animal of the better class, more highly organized and of larger intelligence; but that he is a spiritual being, allied to the infinite Spirit and able to reach the true goal of his existence only in willing obedience to that supreme Spirit. Anything else than this, whether it be the worship of wealth, or the worship of science, is treason to God. It puts the creature in the place of the Creator, and so prepares the way for all ungodliness and unrighteousness. A religious basis is essential to a permanent morality, and although the late Mr. John Stuart Mill held that there could be a religion without a personal God, all experience is against his crude notion. Men who begin by denying the rights of their Maker will sooner or later end by denying the rights of their fellow-men.

2. The world has often flattered itself that "the false prophet and the unclean spirit" have completely passed away, that science has effectually disposed of superstition, that the progress of education and intelligence has put an end to soothsaying and necromancy. Yet our own generation has completely exploded this flattering dream. The heart of our own enlightened land where the schoolmaster has been abroad for generations, has witnessed the resurrection and diffusion of errors which are usually considered as belonging only to the twilight of civilization. The miserable first king of Israel resorted to the witch of Endor, only after every other door of knowledge had been hopelessly closed against him; but now under the blaze of a completed revelation, with Christ at the right hand of God, and the Holy Spirit promised to all who seek aright, men revive an antiquated delusion and seek for the living to the dead. Nay, many who reject and scoff at the Scriptures, receive with implicit faith what purport to be communications from the ghosts of the departed. It is a fulfillment of the Apostolic declaration (2 Tim. iv. 4), "They who turn away their ears from the truth shall be turned unto fables." Man stands too close to the unseen world to deny or ignore its existence; his own condition here with its dependence and exposure makes him look wistfully for something higher and better. If that craving is not satisfied legitimately, it will be illegitimately. The alternative to Faith is not unbelief but misbelief. Men must believe something. If they obey the laws of evidence, they will receive the only proven revelation from the invisible world; if not, then all that remains is belief without evidence, that is, superstition. Nor will this be altered if there be a common school, and a printing-press, and a scientific association in every hamlet of the land. No culture of the intellect can destroy or smother man's moral and spiritual nature. The heart, the conscience, the sense of responsibility, will still survive and demand some appropriate nutriment. To offer to these the latest discoveries in physics, is to offer stones instead of bread, or a scorpion instead of a fish. If they do not receive the living oracles of the Spirit of holiness, they fall into the hands of "the spirit of uncleanness," whose working is with lying wonders and all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved (2 Thes. ii. 9, 10).

3. The energy of moral rebuke in a healthy state of Zion, is well shown in the pictorial representation of the Prophet. In the fifth Book of Moses provision is made for the prompt and severe punishment of any one who should introduce the worship of a false god (Deut. xiii. 6–9). The Jewish commonwealth, being an actual theocracy, idolatry was simply and literally high treason, a blow at the life of the state, and as such a capital crime. Hence no degree of kindred or affection was allowed to exempt any one from denouncing such a criminal. Even a man's nearest relatives were to be the first to put their hands to his execution when he was found judicially obnoxious to the penalty. Even so, declares Zechariah, in days to come will the parents who naturally cling to a prodigal boy, even when he may be hated and despised by all the world, yet overcome their affection, and themselves thrust through the child who is a lying prophet. The representation is strong, but not exaggerated. Literally understood it is of course impossible. Under the Gospel civil punishments for religious errors have and can have no place. But the underlying thought — intense and absolute loyalty to God — is as appropriate now as it ever was. The religious element in man's nature is to become dominant, nay supreme. Love to God, like Aaron's rod, is to swallow up all other

affections. Nothing is to come into competition with allegiance to truth and holiness. Our Lord presented the duty with all plainness: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matt. x. 37). It often happens that the claims of relatives and the claims of Christ come into collision; and when they do, the former must give way. We must choose to displease those whom we most love on earth rather than displease Him who died for us on the cross. This doctrine is quite repulsive to the sentimentalists who exalt the domestic affections to the highest place in human esteem, but it is none the less true, being indeed a simple corollary from the first principle of all religion, that the object of worship is to be loved supremely, and all other beings, however near or dear, subordinately.

4. But this is a very different thing from the self-inflicted tortures of the heathen and of all false religionists. The man in the text with "wounds between his hands," represents a class found in all ages and lands. Clear references to these are found in the Scripture (Deut. xiv. 1; Jer. xvi. 6; xli. 5), and an actual instance is seen in the priests of Baal in their contest with Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 28). The custom originated in the uneasy consciousness of guilt and of the necessity for expiation. Men in their blindness conceived that by the merciless punishment of their own bodies they would render a species of satisfaction, and so regain the favor of the offended deities. The folly of this form of worship is well exposed by Seneca (quoted by Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, vi. 10), and yet it is not so absurd as it would seem. For if a man believes that the gods will exact some suffering for sins, and that by inflicting it upon himself he may forestall their action and get off on cheaper terms, it is not easy to refute him on rationalistic grounds. The difficulty in his case is that conscience is aroused, and yet there is no knowledge of the doctrine of substitution or atonement. Hence even in Christian lands, whenever that doctrine is not understood in its simplicity and fullness, the same thing occurs in a less aggravated form. Fastings and mortifications and penances of various kinds are cheerfully endured as compensations for guilt. It is hard for poor human nature to learn that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin." Yet nothing is clearer in the Scripture than that the will-worship which consists in pains and privations, inflicted and endured for their own sake, is most offensive to the Most High. He Himself never sends afflictions unless there is a *needs be*, and He does not ask us to be other than Himself. Self-denial is indeed a large part of the Christian life, but it is self-denial for an object beyond itself — not as satisfaction for sin or a price paid for heaven, but out of love for Christ, as a means of cultivating holiness or of winning souls for the kingdom. Privation borne with such views is indeed an honor and a blessing; but if inflicted for its own sake, it puts even such a transcendent genius as Pascal with his hair shirt and iron-pointed girdle, on the same level with the self-gashed devotees of Baal, or the forsworn diviner whom Zechariah describes.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

MOORE: Ver. 3. Love to God must be paramount to all other affections, even the most tender. It is in our present imperfect sanctification inconceivable how we could acquiesce in the perdition of our children without a pang that would poison all the bliss of heaven, and yet it shall be so. Much as we love them, we shall love God and his law immeasurably more. — Vers. 4–6: Sinners shall at last be made to confess their sins and the justice of their punishment; and the bitterest drop in the cup of their agony will be that they have wrung it out for themselves, and that it is all just.

CALVIN: *Falsehood hast thou spoken in the name of Jehovah.* If we rightly consider what this is, it will certainly appear to us more detestable than to kill an innocent man, or to destroy a guest with poison, or to lay violent hands upon one's own father. The greatest of all crimes does not come up to this horrible and monstrous wickedness.

JAY: *Wounded in the house of my friends.* There are four kinds of such wounds. (1.) Those arising from their just reprehensions. (2.) Those that result from their sufferings. (3.) Those produced by our being bereaved of them. (4.) Those inflicted by their improper conduct. Again. If the Lord Jesus be the sufferer, He is wounded in the house of his friends, by their negligent conduct — by their selfishness — by their distrust — by their timidity — by their gloomy conduct — by their unholiness. His question is, Is this thy kindness to thy friend?

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4. THE SWORD AWAKING AGAINST THE SHEPHERD AND THE FLOCK.

CHAPTER XIII. 7–9.

A. *The Shepherd is smitten at Jehovah's Command, and the Sheep scattered, yet not hopelessly* (ver. 7). B. *The Excision of Two Thirds of the Flock* (ver. 8). C. *A further Refinement by Sorrow with a joyful Issue* (ver. 9).

7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd,
And against a man, my fellow,[1] saith Jehovah of Hosts;
Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered,
And I will bring back my hand[2] upon the little ones.
8 And it shall be in all the land, saith Jehovah,
Two parts therein shall be cut off,[3] shall die,
And the third shall be left therein.

9 And I will bring the third part into the fire,[4]
And will refine them as silver is refined,
And will try them as gold is tried;
He[5] shall call upon my name and I will answer;[6]
I will say,[7] It is my people,
And he shall say, Jehovah is my God.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 7.— גֶּבֶר עֲמִיתִי. These two nouns are in apposition, just as in the analogous phrase אִישׁ חֲסִידֶךָ, in Deut. xxxiii. 8.

2 Ver. 7.— הֲשִׁבֹתִי יָדִי = return my hand, stretch it out again. Cf. 2 Sam. viii. 3.

3 Ver. 8.— יִכָּרְתוּ = shall be cut off. In xiv. 2 this verb denotes cutting off by transportation, but here its sense is determined by the following verb.

4 Ver. 9.— בָּאֵשׁ. *Into* the fire, is more literal and expressive than the E. V. *through*.

5 Ver. 9.— הוּא. *He* shall call. It is better to preserve the singular in the rendering, as more idiomatic and more vivid.

6 Ver. 9.— אֶעֱנֶה = not simply will *hear*, as in E. V. (although that necessarily includes a reply), but distinctly, *answer*. Cf. Is. lxv. 24, xli. 17. So Dr. Riggs (Emendations).

7 Ver. 9.— אָמַרְתִּי. Before this preterite, the English translator of Calvin says that a vav conversive is dropped, which he undertakes to supply from the LXX., Syriac, and Arabic versions. But the addition is as unauthorized as it is tasteless.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Here again there is evidently a very sudden change of subject. The prophet passes at once from recounting the evasions of a pretender to prophecy to a dramatic representation of the good shepherd suffering under a divine infliction. No transition could well be more abrupt. Moreover, he seems to turn back on his course, quite forsaking the chronological order he has heretofore pursued in developing the Messianic revelation. In the ninth chapter he set forth the lowly king, individualizing his peculiar entrance into the holy city; in the eleventh he gave a symbolical representation of his rejection by the covenant people, with a distinct allusion to the wages of his betrayer; in the twelfth he stated the wonderful efficacy of the sight of his pierced form in awakening the deepest penitence and securing pardon and renewal. Yet here instead of advancing farther, a return is made to the fact of the Messiah's death. How are we to account for this startling transition and seemingly retrograde movement? Of the former, Professor Cowles (*M. P.*, p. 367) suggests an ingenious explanation founded upon the law of association of ideas. "The close analogy between the false prophet, whose hands had been gashed and pierced 'in the house of his friends,' and the Messiah, whose hands were pierced in a death by crucifixion among those who ought to have been his friends, suggested the latter case and led the prophet to speak of it here." The learned Professor has certainly given the clew to the connection, but I should prefer to state it in a different way. The relation is one of contrast rather than of likeness. Zechariah had been speaking of a miserable pretender to prophecy, a man marked with the scars of his reasonless wounds received in idol-worship, and vainly attempting to falsify their origin. Now he turns to the true prophet and teacher, the faithful shepherd whose scars are real and significant, who was not only wounded but slain, and whose death was the salvation of his flock. But in stating this fact, the prophet introduces a new and peculiar element in the tragedy,—one which he at least had not before emphasized or even adverted to. This is the immediate agency of Jehovah in bringing about the bloody result. It is God who arouses the sword sleeping in its scabbard, He points it at his own fellow, He gives the command to thrust it home.

Here then is a sufficient reason for the seeming reversion of an orderly progress. It was desirable to suggest the divine agency in the atoning death of the Good Shepherd, and that not simply for its own sake as indicating the completeness and perpetuity of the satisfaction rendered (Is. liii. 10), but also in order to set forth the assimilation of character and course between the Shepherd and his flock. Both are to suffer, although in different relations and for different purposes. The smiting of the leader involves in the first instance at least the scattering of the sheep. And although Jehovah will turn his hand for good upon the little ones [the little flock, Luke xii. 32], yet afterwards there will be severe and most destructive visitations, cutting off two parts out of three, and even the third part that remains is not to escape unscathed. It shall be cast into a furnace, and there be subjected to intense and protracted heat, until as in the case of the precious metals the dross and alloy are consumed and the pure gold and silver is left. The head and the members of the spiritual body then are to pass through a like experience. He suffered, and they also shall suffer. And this statement forms a necessary limitation of the glowing passages in earlier predictions which seem to promise unbroken prosperity and an endless train of outward blessings (ix. 17, x. 7, 12, xii. 6, 9). On the contrary, while the flock will have "peace" in its shepherd, peace in its largest and best sense, yet in the world it shall have "tribulation." In the general it is true, and always has been true, that "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts xiv. 22). The sphere of the prediction is not to be arbitrarily restricted. It speaks of "the land," of course the land of Israel, but only in so far as it represents the theatre upon which the adherents, nominal or real, of the Messiah are found, and whether they belong to Israel after the flesh or not. It is the Church of the future

in its composite nature to which Zechariah refers, and of which he affirms a characteristic feature, which is not fortuitous or unmeaning, but an express appointment of Jehovah of Hosts; intended to bring the followers of the Saviour into a fellowship of suffering with Himself.

The three verses of this passage are closely connected. First, there is a clear statement of the smiting of the shepherd by Jehovah Himself, and then a representation of the effect of this procedure upon the flock. Such effects are not transient but abiding, or rather, the immediate result typifies what is to be the general condition of the flock while it is passing through the wilderness of this world.

Ver. 1. **Awake, O sword . . . . my fellow.** The object of address in this startling dramatic outburst is not some unknown person (Hitzig), but the sword itself, as in Jer. xlvii. 6. *O sword of Jehovah, how long wilt thou not*, etc. The sword here is used representatively for any means of taking life. Ex. v. 21; Rom. xiii 4. The Romans called the right of the magistrates to inflict capital punishment, *jus gladii*. Uriah was pierced by the *arrows* of the Ammonites, yet the Lord said to David (2 Sam. xii. 9), "Thou hast slain him by the *sword* of the children of Ammon." The person against whom the sword is to execute its deadly mission is described as Jehovah's **shepherd**, the natural reference of which is to one or the other of the shepherds mentioned in ch. xi. Some suppose that the foolish shepherd (xi. 15, 17) is intended (Grotius, Ewald, Maurer, Hitzig), but this does not follow necessarily from his being pierced by the sword, since in Is. liii. Jehovah is represented as bruising his righteous servant in whom He finds no fault. It is, moreover, put out of the question by the succeeding clause, **the man my fellow**, which could not, on any reasonable view, be applied to an unworthy person. גֶּבֶר עֲמִיתִי is very variously rendered in the versions, — LXX., *fellow-citizen*, Aqu., *kinsman*, Sym., *of my people*, Syr., *friend*, Targ., *associate who is like him*, Vulg., *who cleaves to me*, Theod., *neighbor*. The word עמית is found only here and in Leviticus, where it occurs eleven times (xix. 11, 15, 17, etc.), and always with a pronominal suffix, and as a concrete noun. Its general force is shown in xxv. 15, where it is used interchangeably with *brother*. It is certainly an abstract noun by its formation, and is so rendered by many (Gesenius, Fürst), but the uniform usage in Leviticus is decisive against this. Moses employs the term evidently to denote a close and intimate connection. Perhaps there is no nearer English equivalent than that of the E. V., —*fellow*. גֶּבֶר is not the ordinary word for man, but one derived from a root signifying to be strong, yet it is doubtful if any stress is to be laid upon this circumstance (Neumann), but it is scarcely doubtful that the term calls attention to the fact that he who is Jehovah's fellow is also a man (Job xvi. 21). Who now is this peculiar being? Not Judas Maccabæus (Grotius), nor Pekah (Bunsen), nor Jehoiakim (Maurer), nor Josiah as representing the Davidic line (Pressel), nor the whole body of rulers including Christ (Calvin), but the Messiah (Fathers, Reformers, and most moderns). The unity indicated by the term *fellow* is one not merely of will or association, much less of function, but of nature or essence. It is common to object to this view that it is foreign to the sphere of the Old Testament, which knows nothing of the trinity of persons in the Godhead, so clearly revealed in the New. But this begs the question. And if it be admitted that a plurality of persons is distinctly taught in the later Scriptures, it is the most natural thing possible to find indications in the earlier revelation pointing in this direction, — not proof-texts, nor direct assertions, but statements like those in Pss. ii., cx., etc., which, although they may have been mysterious to those who first read or heard them, are to us illuminated by rays reflected back from the Light of the world. Were there any doubt it would be removed by the express allusion of our Lord in Matt. xxvi. 31, 32, Mark xiv. 27, where He applies the latter half of the verse to Himself and his disciples. Yet this part cannot be separated from what precedes. Both must have a common subject. **Smite the shepherd.** The poetical apostrophe to the sword is here continued. Michaelis and others suppose the address to be indefinite, because the noun is feminine while the verb is masculine, but such an enallage of gender is not uncommon in Hebrew. See an early example in Gen. iv. 7. For the metaphor in the scattering of the sheep, see 1 Kings xxii. 17. In our Lord's quotation, he uses the LXX.,[1] with the exception of the initial word, which he resolves into a future, *I will smite*. This only brings out more clearly what is the obvious thought of the whole passage, — the direct agency of Jehovah in the smiting. As the Apostle Peter said on the day of Pentecost, that while the Jews had by wicked hands crucified the Saviour, yet this was done by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Our Lord Himself said to the man who ordered the crucifixion, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above (John xix. 11). **The sheep who are scattered**, are most naturally understood as the flock which the shepherd had to feed (ch. xi. 4), *i. e.*, not the entire race of men on one hand, nor merely the Christian Church on the other, but the covenant nation, embracing both believing and unbelieving members. This is no hindrance to the specific application of the words made by our Lord in his quotation. The dispersion of the disciples upon the occasion of Christ's arrest, was but one fulfillment of this extensive statement, **I will bring back my hand.** This phrase = to make a person once more the object of one's active care, is in itself indefinite, and may be used in a good sense or a bad one. Here the former seems preferable (as in Is. i. 25), as it indicates an exception to the general rule, and this exception is made in favor of **the little ones**, who are apparently "the wretched of the flock," in xi. 7, 11, the poor and pious portion of the nation. Hengstenberg *in loc.* denies this, but does not seem to be consistent with himself. Indeed, the difference stated here between the whole flock scattered and the little ones mercifully revisited, is simply what the two following verses state in a more expanded form as a contrast between a general devastation of the whole body and the fate of a small portion which is preserved through the trial, and by means of it is refined, purified, and blessed.

Vers. 8, 9. These verses dilate the thought of the previous verse in regard to the scattering of

[1] Stier (*Reden Jesu, in loc.*) declares that Matthew did not use the LXX., which is true in respect to the common text of the Seventy, but not in regard to the Codex Alexandrinus, from which he differs only in the unimportant point mentioned in the text. The Vat. and Sinait. Codd. read, πατάξατε τοὺς ποιμένας καὶ ἐκσπάσατε τὰ πρόβατα

the flock and the return of God's hand in mercy to the little ones.

Ver. 9. **In all the land** = not the earth (Mark., Kliefoth) but the land in which the Lord had undertaken the office of a shepherd, and with which the Prophet throughout is chiefly concerned (xii. 12), the holy land (Hengstenberg, Ewald, Köhler); yet not this in its literal sense, but as representing the domain covered by the kingdom of God. The prediction cannot be consistently interpreted as referring only to the national Israel.

The peculiar expression פִּי־שְׁנַיִם = *a mouth of two*, is taken from the Pentateuch (Deut. xxi. 17), where it indicates the double portion inherited by the first-born. In the same sense it is used by Elisha (2 Kings ii. 9), where the younger prophet by no means asked to have twice as much of the Spirit as Elijah had, but to receive a first-born's share in what he possessed, so that he might thus become his acknowledged heir and successor. Here the phrase evidently means two-thirds, since what remains is called the third. **Shall be cut off, shall die.** The latter verb removes any ambiguity lurking in the former, and shows that not only exile but a literal death is intended. This frightful sweep of judgment is paralleled by the words of Ezek. v. 2-12, where the Lord predicts that a third part shall perish by pestilence and famine, another third by the sword, and the remaining third be scattered to the winds, which of course, although it is not so stated, might be recovered again. (Cf. also the preservation of a tenth amid a general overthrow in Is. vi. 13).

Ver. 9. **Bring the third part into the fire.** The third part, although it will escape destruction, does not do so on the ground of inherent righteousness, but rather of grace. Its constituent parts need a sore discipline, and it is not withheld. They are refined and purified by processes as severe as those to which the precious metals are subjected. The metaphor is common in Scripture (Ps. lx. 10; Is. xlviii. 10; Jer. ix. 7; Mal. iii. 3. The Apostle Peter (1 Pet. i. 6, 7) wrote, "wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory." But who constitute this third part? Some say, the entire race of the Jews during the whole period of the present dispersion (C. B. Michaelis, Köhler, *et al.*), but, as Hengstenberg justly urges, in that case unbelieving Judaism would be regarded as the sole and legitimate continuation of Israel, which is simply impossible. The true application is to the entire kingdom of God on earth, whether composed of Jews or of Gentiles. True believers are precious in the Lord's eyes as silver and gold, and He subjects them to an intense and lengthened trial, but the design and result is not to destroy but to refine. The attainment of this result is well expressed by the concluding words, showing the mutual intercourse and confidence of the people and their Lord. They call and He answers. He claims them for his people, and they claim Him for their God. Everything is included under these comprehensive phrases (cf. viii. 8; Hosea ii. 25; Jer. xxiv. 7; xxx. 22).

Professor Cowles thus states the connection of the verses: "The manifestation of Jesus Christ in the flesh served to reveal the utter rottenness of the visible Jewish Church. When the Shepherd was smitten, the mass of that Church went to ruin; only a few of the little ones were saved. So in the advanced ages of the Christian Church, corruption became again fearfully prevalent, and another great sifting process became indispensable before the era of the final conquest and triumph of Christ's kingdom could open" (*M. P.*, 368).

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. The salient point of the entire passage is the immediate agency of Jehovah of Hosts in the suffering and death of the Good Shepherd. We lose sight of an ungrateful people, of their scornful rejection of the unspeakable gift, and of the spear by which human hands pierce a royal benefactor, and are set face to face with a tragedy in which one divine person gives over another to a violent death. A man, a real, veritable man is the subject of the infliction, but that man is the fellow of Jehovah. The wondrous constitution of his personality, a divine nature wrapping around itself our humanity in an indissoluble union, rendered this possible. Its actual occurrence is the most significant truth in Christian theology. The atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ was in no sense an act of will-worship, a device from without to appease the wrath of a Moloch sitting upon the throne of the universe. On the contrary, it was the expression of God's infinite wisdom and love, the result of his own self-moved grace and compassion. As the record runs in the fore-front of the Gospel, God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son. And that Son said in prophecy, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Ps. xl. 7, 8; Heb. x. 9, 10), and in his own person, "I lay down my life; this commandment have I received of my Father" (John x. 17). It was then God the supreme, God the judge, God whose law was broken, who originated and carried through the great sacrifice. And behind all the voluntary and wicked actors in the scenes of the prætorium and the Mount of Calvary stood Jehovah of Hosts, saying, Awake, O sword. The LORD laid on him the iniquity of us all. It pleased the LORD to bruise Him. HE put his soul to grief. The Apostle speaks of the love of Christ as that which passeth knowledge; but the same is equally true of the eternal Father. "God only knows the love of God." No human plummet is long enough to sound the depths of that grace which led Jehovah of Hosts to say of his only-begotten, Smite the shepherd. The Lord Jesus was his own Son, the brightness of his glory and the very image of his being, and therefore the object of infinite complacency, dear to Him beyond all human expression or conception, and yet He spared Him not, but freely delivered Him up for us all.

2. The references of our Lord to this passage bear mainly upon its statement concerning his followers. In John (xvi. 32) we read, "Behold the hour cometh, yea is now come that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone." Matthew (xxvi. 31) gives a later and fuller expression, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night, for it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." The prophecy was fulfilled, but very far from being exhausted, in the dispersion of the disciples when our Lord was arrested. The cause of the flight of the twelve was that their faith was staggered and their confidence impaired by such an untoward event. So it has always been. "The offense of the cross" shows itself in

every generation. The ignominious death of the Shepherd is a stumbling-block to the flock. But this does not continue in "the little ones," the faithful few. They are recovered by the Lord's own hand, and made to rejoice in that which once was most offensive. This is intimated by the Saviour in the words which follow the quotation in Matthew given above, "But after I am risen again I will go before you into Galilee." This going before (προάξω), is a pastoral act in which the shepherd leads the way, and is followed by the flock. Just as the Saviour gathered again those who fled in fear on the night of the betrayal, so does He still gather those who at first start back from a near view of the cross.

They find that cross not only the conspicuous badge of their profession but its characteristic feature. In a remarkable passage in the Gospel of Matthew (xvi. 21–25), our Lord first foretells his own sufferings at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and then immediately proceeds to set forth similar trials as the necessary result of attachment to Him. His adherents must needs take up their cross and follow Him even to Golgotha. The motto of the Reformed in Holland — *the Church under the Cross* — is true of all believers. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Believers then are not to count it strange when a fiery trial befalls them, as if it were a strange thing (1 Pet. iv. 12). So far from being strange, it is a normal procedure. God's people are to be "partakers of Christ's sufferings." In their case, as in his, the cross precedes the crown.

When great providential calamities, such as war, pestilence, famine, occur, they are not exempt. But the stroke which overwhelms and destroys others, is to them overruled for good. Bad trees are mercilessly rooted out, but the good are only "purged" or pruned. The spurious, reprobate metal is cast away, but the genuine article comes out of the furnace purified and ennobled. It was needful for them to go through the process. The holiest of mere men is improved by passing through the fire. A high encomium was pronounced upon Job before his afflictions, yet the issue of his unparalleled probation taught him that he was vile, and laid him in dust and ashes (xl. 4; xlii. 6). Sorrows are one of the tokens of sonship; to forget this is to faint in the day of adversity. "The fellowship of his sufferings" (Phil. iii. 10), the community of shepherd and flock in trials, is one of the blessed mysteries of the Christian life. Believers drink of Christ's cup and are baptized with his baptism. Companionship in sorrow links them by closer ties and brings them into tenderer communion than is possible in any other way. And so the assimilation proceeds rapidly from glory to glory. The suffering people are changed into the image of their once suffering Lord, and they justly glory in infirmities.

3. The summit of human felicity is described in the mutual proprietorship which the Prophet, following his predecessors, ascribes to God and his people. On the one hand, Jehovah says, It is my people. The foundation passage on this point is given in Ex. xiv. 5: "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all peoples; for all the earth is mine." The whole earth is the Lord's, and all nations belong to Him as Creator and Preserver, but He has been pleased to choose one to stand to Him in a particular and most endearing relation. Israel is his סְגֻלָּה, set apart and distinguished from all others as a possession of peculiar value. Cf. Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2; xxvi. 18; Ps. cxxxv. 4; Mal. iii. 17. Language of the same tenor is applied in the New Testament to the Christian Israel; "a purchased possession" (Eph. i. 14), "a peculiar people" (Titus ii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 9). From the mass of fallen men, Jehovah chooses an innumerable multitude whom He condescends to call his portion or inheritance. On them He lavishes the riches of his grace, and in them He reveals his glory to the admiration of all holy intelligences. And they are fitted to this high destiny, being conformed to the image of their Lord, and obedient to his will. As such He spares them in times of trial as a man spareth his own son that serveth him (Mal. iii. 17), has "his delights" with them (Prov. viii. 31), and rejoices over them with the joy of a bridegroom over his bride (Is. lxii. 5).

On the other hand, the people say, Jehovah is my God. Not only do they acknowledge Him as divine and profess his worship in distinction from heathen or infidels, but they recognize Him as their infinite portion. The knowledge of Him is the best of all knowledges, and his service is the highest form of enjoyment. His favor is life, his loving-kindness better than life. His perfections are a sure pledge of their safety, blessedness, and glory. His gifts are many and precious, but He himself is better than them all, and the intimate and sacred communion his people are permitted to hold with Him fills the measure of their happiness. Even under the shadows of the Old Testament they found their supreme delight here. O God, thou art my God, my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee (Ps. lxiii. 1). Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee (Ps. lxxiii. 25).

This thought is applied by Augustine (*Civ. Dei*, xxii. 20) to the future home of the spirits of the just. "The reward of righteousness will be He who Himself imparted righteousness, and who promises Himself than whom there can be no gift better or greater. For what else has He said by his Prophet, 'I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people;' what else but this: 'I will be that wherein they shall be satisfied; I will be all things that men righteously desire; life and health, and food and abundance, glory and honor, and peace and all things?' For so do we rightly understand also what the Apostle says, *That God may be all in all.* He will be the end of all our desires, who will Himself be seen without end, will be loved without satiety, will be praised without weariness. This affection, this business, this function of our being will be common to us all, like life everlasting itself."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

MOORE: Ver. 7. *Awake, O sword*, etc. How fearful an evil is sin when it could call forth the sword against God's own coequal and well-beloved Son! The death of Christ was the judicial sentence of God against sin, the endurance of the penalty of the law, and therefore, strictly vicarious and propitiatory. No human merit can mingle with the infinite merit of the work of Christ, for He trod the wine-press alone.

RALPH ERSKINE: *Awake, O sword*, etc. This text, sirs, is a very wonderful one, as ever a poor, mortal man preached upon. For in it there is a cloud, a black cloud, a cloud of divine wrath and vengeance, the cloud of Christ's bloody passion which we are to celebrate the memorials of this day; but like the cloud that led Israel in the wilderness, though it had a black side toward Christ, yet it has a bright and light side toward all the Israel of God; for this cloud of blood distills in a sweet shower of blessings unto poor sinners; there is a light in this cloud wherein we may see God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

CALVIN: *Will refine them*, etc. The stubble and the chaff are cast into the fire, but without any benefit, for they are wholly consumed. But when gold and silver are put in the fire, it is that greater purity may be produced, and what is precious be made more apparent. Do any ask whether God can by his Spirit alone draw the elect to religion, and if so, why this fire of affliction is necessary? The answer is, that the Prophet speaks not of what God can do but of what He will do, and we ought not to dispute on the subject but be satisfied with what He has appointed. Though chastisement is hard while we are undergoing it, yet we should estimate it by its result, the peaceable fruits of righteousness (Heb. xii. 11).

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5. FINAL CONFLICT AND TRIUMPH OF GOD'S KINGDOM.

CHAPTER XIV.

A. *A great and at first successful Assault is made upon the Holy City* (vers. 1, 2). B. *Then God miraculously interposes, grants Escape, and after a mingled Condition of Things gives a final and glorious Deliverance* (vers. 3–7). C. *A Stream of Salvation pours over the whole Land* (vers. 8–11). D. *The Enemies are chastised* (vers. 12–15). E. *The Remnant of Them turn to the Lord* (vers. 16–19). F. *Jerusalem becomes thoroughly Holy* (vers. 20, 21).

1 Behold, a day cometh to Jehovah,[1]
And thy spoil is divided in the midst of thee.
2 And I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to battle;
And the city shall be taken and the houses[2] rifled,
And the women shall be ravished;[3]
And half the city shall go forth into captivity,
And the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
3 And Jehovah shall go forth and fight against those nations,
As in[4] his day of battle, in the day of conflict.
4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives
Which is before Jerusalem on the east;
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in the centre
Eastward and westward, a very great valley,[5]
And half of the mountain shall recede towards the north,
And its (other) half toward the south.
5 And ye shall flee[6] to the valley of my mountains,[7]
For the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal,
And ye shall flee as ye fled before the earthquake,
In the days of Uzziah the king of Judah;
And Jehovah my God shall come,
All the saints with thee![8]
6 And it shall come to pass in that day,
It will not be light, the glorious[9] will withdraw themselves.
7 And the day shall be one,
It shall be known to Jehovah,
Not day and not night,
And at evening time there shall be light.
8 And it shall be in that day,
Living waters shall go out from Jerusalem,
Half of them to the eastern[10] sea,
And half of them to the western sea,
In summer and in winter shall it be.
9 And Jehovah shall be king over all the land;
In that day Jehovah shall be one[11] and his name one.

10 All the land shall be changed like the plain
From Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem,
And she shall be high,[12] and dwell in her place
From Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate,
To the corner gate,
And from the tower of Hananeel to the king's wine-presses.
11 And they shall dwell in her,
And there shall be no more curse,[13]
And Jerusalem shall sit secure.[14]
12 And this shall be the plague
With which Jehovah will smite all the peoples[15]
Who have fought against Jerusalem;
His[16] flesh shall consume away while he stands upon his feet,
And his eyes shall consume away in their sockets,
And his tongue shall consume away in their mouth.
13 And it shall be in that day that
There shall be among them a great confusion[17] from Jehovah,
And they shall seize each his neighbor's hand,
And his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor;
14 And Judah also shall fight at[18] Jerusalem,
And the riches of all the nations around shall be gathered,
Gold and silver and apparel in great abundance.
15 And so[19] shall be the plague of the horse,
Of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass,
And of all the cattle that shall be in these camps,
Even as this plague.
16 And it shall be that
All that is left of the nations which came against Jerusalem
Shall[20] go up from[21] year to year
To worship the King, Jehovah of Hosts,
And to keep the feast of tabernacles.
17 And it shall be that whoso of the[22] families of the earth
Shall not go up to Jerusalem
To worship the King, Jehovah of Hosts,
Upon them there shall be no rain.
18 And if the family of Egypt go not up and come not,
Upon[23] them there shall be none,
[Upon them] shall be the plague
With which Jehovah shall plague the nations
Which go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.
19 This shall be the sin[24] of Egypt,
And the sin of all the nations
Which go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.
20 In that day there shall be on the bells[25] of the horses,
Holiness to Jehovah,
And the pots in the house of Jehovah
Shall be as the bowls before the altar.
21 And every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah
Shall be holiness to Jehovah of Hosts.
And all who sacrifice shall come
And take of them and sacrifice therein,
And there shall no more be a Canaanite[26]
In the house of Jehovah of Hosts in that day.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1.—לַיהוָֹה is to be connected with יוֹם—Jehovah's day. See Exeg. and Crit.

2 Ver. 2.—הַבָּתִּים. The Munach stands here in place of Metheg, to show that the vowel is long.

3 Ver. 2. — תִּשָּׁגַלְנָה. The Keri substitutes for this word, here as elsewhere (Deut. xxviii. 30, etc.), the word שָׁכַב — a very needless euphemism.

4 Ver 3. — כְּיוֹם. The preposition is to be supplied from the next clause.

5 Ver. 4. — גֵיא is not a *cas. construc.* of גַּיְא (Ewald, Green), but an absolute form of the same noun (Fürst).

6 Ver. 5. — In place of נִסְתַּם several MSS. read נִסְתָּם, which is the reading followed by LXX., Aq., Sym., Targ., Arab., the first of which renders ἐμφραχθήσεται, *shall be stopped up.* This is adopted by Flügge, Dathe, Blayney, and Boothroyd; but the sense is so inept that some modern critics refuse even to notice it.

7 Ver. 5. — הָרַי is not a simple plural, but has the suffix of the first person.

8 Ver. 5. — Instead of עִמָּךְ many MSS. and all the old versions read עִמּוֹ, but the former is to be preferred, both as the more difficult reading and as more vivid and expressive.

9 Ver. 6. — Henderson claims a preponderance of MSS. authority for the Keri וְקִפָּ' over the Kethib יְקָפָ', and the ancient versions all favor it, yet exegetical necessity compels one to adopt the latter. So Hengstenberg, Hoffmann, Kliefoth, Köhler, Keil, Pressel, Dr. Van Dyck in new *Arab. Bible*, Fürst in his new German Version, etc.

10 Ver. 8. — הַקַּדְמוֹנִי. The E. V. "former" is misleading. The Genevan gives "east" which is correct. The Hebrews determined the points of the compass by looking to the east, and so what was before them was the east, and what was אחור = behind, was west.

11 Ver. 9. — Henderson objects to the rendering "Jehovah shall be one," that it makes "the passage teach either that Jehovah was not one before, or that he will no longer be three or triune;" and he renders "Jehovah alone shall be." But his scruples are idle. What is meant is the universal recognition of the divine unity and self-existence, and this is obtained just as well by the ordinary rendering as by the one he suggests (cf. Deut. vi. 4).

12 Ver. 10. — This is the only place where the form רָאַם occurs; in all other cases רוּם is used. True, here Fürst takes רָאֲמָה for a proper noun, and renders, "like the plain of Jordan shall Jerusalem and Ramah be fruitful and inhabited" (Lex. *sub. voc.*), but this wholly disregards the accents, and furnishes no equivalent, since the mention of such an obscure place would be unmeaning. He himself in his new German Version returns to the old interpretation

13 Ver. 11. — חֵרֶם. The E. V. "utter destruction," hardly expresses the force of this word, which means such destruction caused by a divine decree = curse (Mal. iv. 6).

14 Ver. 11. — יָשְׁ' בֶּטַח. Here, the strict rendering *sit secure*, is more vivid than the E. V., *safely inhabited.*

15 Ver. 12. — עַמִּים = peoples, cf. on viii. 22.

16 Ver. 12. — *His* flesh, etc. The suffixes are all singular except in the case of the last noun, *their mouth.* Of course the meaning is "each one's" flesh, etc.

17 Ver. 13. — "Tumult" does not express the full sense of מְהוּמָה = a panic terror or confusion (1 Sam. xiv. 20).

18 Ver. 14. — בִּיר'. The text of the E. V. is right, and the marginal reading *against* to be rejected. See Exeg. and Crit.

19 Ver. 15. — כֵּן here precedes its correlative כְּ; elsewhere the order is just the reverse.

20 Ver. 16. — The construction is anacolouthic; the subject standing absolutely at the beginning, while the predicate is appended with *vav conver.* וְעָלוּ.

21 Ver. 16. — מִדֵּי is literally "*from the sufficiency of* year to year," but expresses nothing more than the simple preposition (cf. Is. lx. 23).

22 Ver. 17. — The "all" supplied by the E. V. is quite superfluous.

23 Ver. 18. — וְלֹא עֲלֵיהֶם introduces the apodosis, and הַגֶּשֶׁם is to be supplied from the preceding verse.

24 Ver. 19. — חַטַּאת (LXX.: ἁμαρτιά, Vulg.: *peccatum*) should surely be rendered *sin*, however it may be explained. Dr. Van Dyck, in the new Arabic Bible, conforms to the E. V., as does Fürst in his German Version. The Dutch Bible has, *de zonde*; Luther, *Sünde.*

25 Ver. 20. — מְצִלּוֹת. LXX.: χαλίνον; Vulg., *frænum*; Luther, *Rüstung*; but the meaning in E. V., *bells*, is now established. Dr. Riggs gives a wordy paraphrase, *tinkling bridle ornaments.*

26 Ver. 21. — כְּנַעֲנִי. LXX. transfer the word. Vulg. translates, — *mercator*; Fürst *Krämer.*

CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL.

This concluding chapter of the Prophet has been very variously interpreted. Calvin, Grotius, and others supposed it to refer to the times of the Maccabees, which for a variety of reasons is scarcely possible. Marckius, following Cyril and Theodoret, applied its opening verses to the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus, and with him agree Lowth, Adam Clarke, and Henderson; but the circumstances here stated do not correspond with the facts of history, nor if they did, could the former part of the chapter be violently sundered from its plain connection with the latter part. The "later criticism" (Hitzig, Knobel, Maurer, Ewald, Bertheau, etc.), refer the passage to the period immediately preceding the Babylonish exile and the catastrophe then threatening Jerusalem; and when reminded of the contrast between the prediction and the facts, appeal to the ethical aim and conditional nature of prophecy as fully accounting for this. But even admitting their principle, it does not apply here, for this chapter has nothing to say of sin and judgment, of repentance and conversion on the part of the covenant people, but only of their dreadful trials and glorious deliverance. Such a prediction, addressed to Judah in the last decen-

nium before the exile, could have exerted no healthful influence, and certainly the glowing statements of the latter part of it have no counterpart in any experience of the restored people.. It only remains then either with Wordsworth, Blayney, Newcome, Moore, Cowles, etc., to refer it to a period yet future, or with Hengstenberg, Keil, etc., to suppose that it describes in general terms the whole development of the Church of God from the commencement of the Messianic era to its close. In either case the chapter must be taken as figurative and not literal. The cleaving of the Mount of Olives in two for the purpose of affording escape to fugitives from Jerusalem; the flowing of two perpetual streams from the holy city in opposite directions; the levelling of the whole land in order to exalt the temple-mountain; the yearly pilgrimage of all nations of the earth to Jerusalem; and the renewal of the old sacrifices of the Mosaic ritual; these are plainly symbolical statements, but not therefore by any means unmeaning or useless. The chapter does not stand alone in the Scriptures. Parallels are to be found in Isaiah (lxv., lxvi.), Ezekiel (xxxviii., xxxix.), and Daniel (xii.), as well as in the closing book of the New Testament.

The Prophet begins with the account of an attack made upon the holy city by all nations, who, instead of being destroyed (like Gog and Magog in Ezekiel) before getting possession of the holy city, seize and plunder it and carry away half its population, and then are met and thwarted by Jehovah, who provides escape for his people. This feature of *escape* inclines one to regard the passage as an ideal picture of all the conflicts of the Church with its foes.

(a.) Vers. 1, 2. *The Attack.* Ver. 1. **Behold, a day cometh,** etc. A day to Jehovah = one belonging to Him, appointed for the manifestation of his power and glory (cf. Is. ii. 12). The final result makes this abundantly plain. **Thy spoil,** etc. The Prophet addresses the city and says that her booty, not (as T. V. Moore, following the Targum, strangely imagines) that which she takes, but that which is taken from her, is leisurely divided among the conquerors in the midst of the city. The details implied in this general announcement are stated in the next verse.

Ver. 2. **And I will gather . . . . ravished.** Jehovah collected these nations just as He roused Pharaoh to pursue Israel (Ex. xiv. 4), in the same way and with the same result. The divine purpose presides over all human wrath and wickedness, and gains its ends, not only in spite, but often by means, of them. The rifling of the houses and dishonoring of the women are expressions taken from Is. xiii. 16, where they are used in reference to Babylon. **And half of the city,** etc. Only a part of the inhabitants are to be driven into exile, the rest remain. It was different at the Chaldæan conquest of Jerusalem, for then the greater portion were carried away, and afterwards even "the remnant that was left" (2 Kings xxv. 11). The verse cannot therefore refer to that subjugation. Nor can it be applied to the overthrow of the holy city by Titus, who neither had all nations under his banner, nor left a half of the population in possession of their homes.

(b.) Vers. 3–7. *The Deliverance.* Ver. 3. **Jehovah goeth forth . . . . battle.** God Himself goes forth against these foes, and fights for his people as He is accustomed to do in a day of battle. The latter clause does not seem to refer particularly to the conflict at the Red Sea (Jerome, Hengstenberg), but rather to the Lord's general course, as shown in many former instances (Keil, Köhler), Josh. x. 14–42; xxiii. 3; Judg. iv. 15; 2 Chron. xx. 15.

Ver. 4. **His feet stand . . . . south.** The situation of the Mount of Olives — **which is before Jerusalem** — is not added as a geographical designation, which surely would be needless, but to indicate its suitableness for the position of one who intended to relieve the holy city. His feet touch it, and the effect is that of an earthquake (Ps. lxviii. 8; Nah. i. 5). The mountain is split through the middle latitudinally, so that the two halves fall back from each other, one toward the north, the other toward the south. The consequence would be the formation of **a very great valley** running east and west. To one fleeing hastily from Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives presented an obstacle of no small importance, as it did to David once (2 Sam. xv. 20); and hence the provision here made for removing the difficulty.

Ver. 5. **And ye shall flee . . . . Judah.** The people will flee into **the valley of my mountains,** not the Tyropœon (Jerome, etc.), but into the valley produced by the two halves of Olivet, which are properly called by Jehovah *his,* since He had just given them their separate existence (so nearly all critics). The reason why the fugitives should flee thither is that this level opening extends to **Azal,** which by almost all expositors, ancient and modern, is considered a proper name denoting a place near Jerusalem, but no trace of any such place now exists. Hengstenberg identifies it with the "Beth-Ezel" of Micah i. 11, and explains its meaning as = "standing still," "ceasing," so that what is promised is that the valley shall extend to a place which in accordance with its name will afford to the fugitives a *cessation* of danger. Köhler follows Symm. and Jerome in rendering it *ad proximum,* which he renders "to very near," *i. e.,* to the point where the fugitives actually are. It seems simpler to suppose that the term refers to a place east of Olivet, well known in the Prophet's day, which by its position would show the valley to be long enough to furnish all needful shelter and escape for the fleeing people. The swiftness of the flight is expressed by comparison to that occasioned by **the earthquake in the days of Uzziah,** which is referred to in Amos i. 1, but of which we have no other information. Some think that the fleeing arises from fear of being swallowed up with their foes by the earthquake (Hengstenber, Keil); but it is more natural to refer it to fear of their enemies. The added clause, **and Jehovah my God comes,** etc., with the suffix of the last word in the second person, indicates the lively joy with which the Prophet hails the appearance of his God, so that as he sees in vision the shining retinue of his saints, he passes from indirect to direct address, and exclaims, **all the saints with thee!** The saints here, according to the analogy of other passages (Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3; Dan. vii. 9, 10; Matt. xxv. 31; Rev. xix. 14), are the holy angels, and not (Vitringa) both holy angels and holy men.

Ver. 6. **And it shall be, etc.** The former part of this verse is very plain, but the last two words are obscure. The Keri represents an early attempt to escape the difficulty by altering the text, giving וְקִפָּאוֹן instead of יְקִפָּאוֹן. This was adopted by the old versions, which, besides, either assumed that יְקָרוֹת was synonymous with קָרוֹת, *cold,* or maintained that the true reading was וְקָרוֹת.

Then, rendering the former noun *ice*, they got the sense, "It will not be light, but (there will be) cold and ice" (Targum, Peshito, Symm., Itala, and so Luther). Some later critics adopting the same text coördinate the three nouns, and bring them all under the negation, thus, "There will not be light and cold and ice," *i. e.*, no alternation of them (Ewald, Bunsen, Umbreit). But this is a very poor sense, unsustained by any analogy in Scripture, and without force in the connection. It is far better to adhere to the Chethib, in which the only grammatical difficulty is the combination of a feminine noun with a verb having a masculine suffix, which surely is not insuperable in Hebrew. יְקָרוֹת means here as elsewhere *precious things*, with the additional idea of splendor or brilliancy, as in Job xxxi. 26, where the moon is said to walk יָקָר = in brightness or magnificently. The mention of **light** just before suggests the thought of the stars or heavenly bodies in general, as what is intended by the **glorious** things. The verb then is taken in its primary sense, *to be contracted* (h. to curdle, to congeal), here = **withdraw themselves**. The whole verse then indicates a day of darkness. The lights of the earth will all disappear. What the former clause states in plain prose, the latter expresses more figuratively.

Ver. 7. **And the day shall be one**, etc. This verse continues the description of the sorrowful time just mentioned. The day shall be *one* in the sense of solitary, unique, peculiar. See the Lexicons. It is **known to Jehovah**, and by implication to no one else, in its true nature. **Not day and not night** = not an admixture of both, but neither, not a νυχθήμερον at all, because the lights of heaven being put out, there are no means of determining what is day and what night. The whole order of nature is miraculously reversed. The expression **at evening time**, etc., is the antithesis of the declaration in Amos viii. 9, "I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will bring darkness upon the land in clear day." At the time when according to the natural course of events darkness should set in, a bright light dawns. Some expositors compare with this verse Rev. xxi. 23–25, but the two passages are radically different. It is true not only at the end of all things, but at many a previous period in the history of the Church, that at evening time it becomes light. Some critics give the sense thus stated by Professor Cowles, "There is a gradation through three distinct stages: first, utter darkness; then, a dim twilight, like that of an eclipse; then, at the close, when you might expect darkness soon to cover the earth, lo, the effulgence of full and glorious day" (*M.* P., 374).

(c.) Vers. 8–11. Blessings from Jerusalem diffuse themselves over the whole land.

Ver. 8. **Living waters shall**, etc. A lively image of the abundance and preciousness of spiritual blessings, as is evident from analogous Scriptures and from the fact that here the water flows in two opposite directions at once, and that it runs not only **in winter**, but **in summer**, when usually in Palestine the streams are altogether dry. These waters come not from occasional rainfalls, but are **living**, *i. e.*, proceed from perennial fountains, and so cover the whole land from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean with fertility and beauty. They issue **from Jerusalem**, the central point of the kingdom of God under the Old Testament, and here therefore appropriately standing for the Christian Church, which is that centre under the New Testament.

Ver. 9. **And Jehovah shall be king**, etc. Most expositors render "over all the *earth*," but the connection before and after refers certainly to Palestine, and there seems no reason for departing from the usual rendering, and the less, inasmuch as beyond doubt Canaan here stands as a type of the kingdom of God in its fullest extent in this world. Of course the meaning is that He will be king not only *potentia* or *de jure*, but *actu et de facto*. In this sense He **shall be one**, *i. e.*, recognized as such, and the same as to his **name** = outward manifestation of his nature. Not only will gross polytheism come to an end, but also that more refined system which regards all forms of worship as different but equally legitimate modes of worshipping the one Divine Being.

Ver. 10. **All the land . . . . wine-presses.** The whole land is to be leveled to a plain in order that Jerusalem may be elevated, and then the holy city is to be restored to its former grandeur. The article is emphatic in **the plain**, which in Hebrew always denotes the Arabah or Ghor, the largest and most celebrated of all the plains of Judæa, the great valley extending from Lebanon to the farther side of the Dead Sea. **Geba** was on the northern frontier of Judah (cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 8). **Rimmon**, distinguished from two other Rimmons on the north (Josh. xix. 13; Judg. xx. 45), by the added clause **south of Jerusalem**, was a city on the border of Edom, given up by Judah to the Simeonites (Josh. xv. 32; xix. 7). In consequence of this depression of all the surrounding country, Jerusalem becomes **high**. The capital seated on her hills shines conspicuous as the only elevation in a very wide region. Of course the physical elevation thus miraculously caused is only figurative of Jerusalem's spiritual exaltation. An exact parallel is found in the repeated and remarkable prediction of Isaiah (ii. 2) and Micah (iv. 1), in which, however, no leveling takes place, but the temple-mountain is so elevated that it overtops all the mountains of the earth. Professor Cowles connects *the plain* closely with the two following words so as to get the sense "like the plain from Geba to Rimmon;" but there was no such plain, — the whole territory between these points being hilly in the extreme. The exaltation of Jerusalem is followed by a complete recovery from the ruin brought upon it by the capture and plunder mentioned in vers. 1, 2. The city **shall dwell** תַחְתֶּיהָ = on its ancient site (cf. xii. 6), and have its old boundaries. These, as they are given here, cannot be determined with certainty. The last clause, **From the tower . . . . wine-presses** (מִן being supplied before מִגְדַּל), is generally understood to give the extent north and south, the tower of Hanameel being at the northeast corner of the city (Neh. iii. 1; xii. 39), and **the wine-presses** in the royal gardens at the south side (Neh. iii. 15). As to the former clauses, the starting-point is **Benjamin's gate**, whence some suppose that the line ran eastward to **the first gate**, *i. q.*, old gate, (Neh. iii. 6), and westward to **the corner gate** (2 Kings xiv. 13), — the gate of Benjamin being on this supposition in the middle of the northern wall (Hengstenberg, Keil). Others with less probability make the corner gate simply a more precise definition of the place of the first gate (Hitzig, Kliefoth). It is to be hoped that the topographical explorations at present in progress on the site

of Jerusalem will shed such light upon the whole subject as will make plain what now can be only conjecturally determined. Still, whatever may be the precise force of terms here used, the general sense is clear. The city shall have its former limits.

Ver. 11. **And they shall dwell . . . . secure.** Instead of going out either as captives or fugitives, the inhabitants shall dwell securely and have no reason to dread further hostile attacks (Is. lxv. 19). The ground of this security is the exemption from the curse, the dreadful *ban* which always follows sin (Josh. vi. 18); and the cessation of this implies that the people are a holy nation. This clause is used (Rev. xxii. 3) in the description of the holy city, the new Jerusalem.

(d.) Vers. 12–15. The destruction of the hostile nations. The Prophet here pauses in his account of the blessings destined for the purified Church, to set forth more fully the punishment of the ungodly.

Ver. 12. **This will be the plague . . . . month.** מַגֵּפָה according to usage always denotes an infliction from the hand of God. The stroke here is the most terrible that can be conceived,—the whole frame rotting away even while the man **stands upon his feet,** *i. e.*, is alive. To emphasize still more the condition of these living corpses, the Prophet adds the rotting of the **eyes** which had spied out the nakedness of the city of God, and of the **tongue** which had blasphemed God and his people. The singular suffixes are of course to be taken distributively.

Ver. 13. **A great confusion from Jehovah.** Another means of destruction is civil discord. The allusion appears to be to a panic terror causing such confusion that each turns his hand upon the other. Instances occur in Israelitish history, Judg. vii. 22; 1 Sam. xiv. 20 (and behold, every man's sword against his neighbor, and there was a very great מְהוּמָה = confusion), 2 Chron. xx. 23. **Seize the hand** denotes a hostile grasp, and the next clause graphically depicts the effort of the assailant to give a home thrust.

Ver. 14. **And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem,** etc. An old and widely accepted view translates the final words of the first clause, "*against* Jerusalem" (Targum, Jerome, Kimchi, Luther, Calvin, Cocceius, and most of the moderns). But this is so flatly against the context, that it must be rejected, even though it be admitted that בְּ after נִלְחַם usually points out the object of attack. In one case at least (Ex. xvii. 8), the preposition has a local sense, and this is true also of Is. xxx. 32, according to Ewald's explanation of the Kethib in that passage. We therefore understand the clause as teaching that Judah = the whole covenant people, will take part in the conflict and carry it on at Jerusalem (LXX., Markius, Hengstenberg, Kleifoth, Keil, Köhler). The consequence of this will be the overthrow of the foes and the capture of all their costly possessions. **Apparel.** As fashions in the East did not and do not change as they do with us, garments of all kinds were kept in great number, and constituted a large part of oriental wealth (Job xxvii. 16, Matt. vi. 19, Jas. v. 2).

Ver. 15. **And so . . . . the plague of the horse,** etc. This verse amplifies the crime and punishment, since it shows the guilt of these foes to be such that even their possessions are overtaken by the divine curse. The case is illustrated by the example of Achan, whose oxen and sheep and asses were burned, along with himself and his children (Josh. vii. 24).

(e.) Vers. 16–19. The remnant of the heathen shall be converted.

Ver. 16. **All that is left . . . . tabernacles.** The prophet states, with an evident allusion to Is. lxvi. 23, that those of the heathen who are not destroyed will all go up yearly to the sanctuary of Jehovah to observe one of the great feasts. This, of course, is figurative, as the most intrepid literalist will scarcely maintain that all nations could by any possibility accomplish such a feat. Henderson seeks to avoid the difficulty by supposing that they will go up in the person of their representatives. But even this ingenious device fails to meet the terms used by Isaiah, *l. c.*, where all flesh is said to come every Sabbath and every new moon. The verse is simply a striking method of depicting the entrance of the heathen into the kingdom of God. Why is **the feast of tabernacles** specified? Not because it occurred in autumn, which is the best season of the year for travelling (Theodoret, Grotius, Rosenmüller); nor because this feast was the holiest and most joyful (Koster, V. Ortenburg, Pressel); nor because of its relation to the ingathering of the harvest (Köhler); nor because such a festival could be observed without any compromise of the principles of the New Dispensation (Henderson); but rather in view of its interesting historical relations (Dachs, C. B. Michaelis, Hengstenberg). It was a feast of thanksgiving for the gracious protection afforded by the Lord during the pilgrimage of his people through the desert, and for their introduction into the blessings of the land of Canaan. In like manner the nations will celebrate the goodness which has brought them through their tedious and perilous wanderings in this life to the true and everlasting kingdom of peace and rest. Carrying out this figurative representation, the prophet adds a penalty to be inflicted upon all absentees.

Ver. 17. **Whoso of the families . . . . no rain.** Rain seems to be mentioned as one of the principal blessings of God, that by which the fruitfulness is produced which occasions the joy of the harvest. It therefore appropriately stands here to represent the whole class of providential favors. Compare the notes on x. 1. It shall be withheld from those who fail to fulfill their duties to Him. See a similar threat, upon Israel, in Deut. xi. 16, 17. Pressel calls attention to the fine use of the word *family* in this verse in connection with *Jehovah as king*, indicating that then the various nations of the earth shall be considered as so many families of the one people of God.

Ver. 18. **And if the family of Egypt go not up,** etc. The menace of the preceding verse is repeated with especial application to Egypt. Many have sought the reason of this particular specification in the natural peculiarities of Egypt, which, being indebted for its fertility not to rain but to the Nile, might seem to be exempt from the threatened drought. But surely, apart from other considerations, this has no force nor application, when it is remembered that even the Nile is dependent upon rains at its source. It is far more natural to attribute the mention of Egypt to its historical relations to Israel as their hereditary foe. The old enemy of the Church shall either join the procession Zionward, or else feel the retributive curse.

Ver. 19. **This shall be the sin of Egypt.** "This," namely, that no rain falls on them.

Hence many adopt the version of חַטַּאת in the English Bible, *punishment* (Targum, Calvin, Henderson), and appeal to Lam. iii. 38, iv. 6, Is. xl. 2. But it is at least doubtful if the word ever has this sense (see on Lam. iv. 6), and accordingly the difficulty is avoided by taking it = sin, including its consequences (Hengstenberg, Keil, Köhler). The inseparable connection between sin and punishment is well expressed in Num. xxxii. 23. The foregoing passage does not require us to believe that at the period spoken of there will still be godless heathen who refuse to acknowledge and worship Jehovah. It may be simply a rhetorical enforcement of the thought that all ungodliness will then entirely cease.

(f.) Vers. 20, 21. Jerusalem becomes thoroughly holy.

Ver. 20. **There shall be on the bells . . . . altar.** מְצִלּוֹת, variously rendered by ancient authorities, is now acknowledged to mean *bells*, which were suspended from horses and mules for the sake of ornament. The phrase inscribed upon these, **Holiness to Jehovah**, is that which was engraved upon the diadem of the high priest (Ex. xxviii. 36). This does not mean that these bells should be employed for religious worship, or used to make sacred vessels (Jewish Critics, Cyril, Grotius); nor that the horses and other means of warfare should be consecrated to the Lord (C. B. Michaelis, Hitzig, Ewald, Maurer); but that the distinction between sacred and profane should cease (Calvin, Hengstenberg, Keil, etc.). Even the smallest outward things, such as have no connection with worship, will be as holy as those which formerly were dedicated by a special consecration to Jehovah. Of course this involves the cessation of the Levitical Economy. An advance upon this thought is contained in the second clause. Not only shall everything profane become holy, but the different degrees of holiness shall cease. The **pots** used for boiling the sacrificial flesh shall be just as holy as the sacred **bowls** which received the blood of the piacular victims. The two kinds of utensils stood at opposite points of the scale of sanctity; to put them on the same level was to say that all would not only be holy, but alike holy. Calvin on this passage cites with ridicule the opinion of Theodoret, that the former part of the verse was fulfilled when Helena, the mother of Constantine, adorned the trappings of a horse with a nail of the cross! Such trifling was too much even for Jerome.

Ver. 21. **And every pot . . . . in that day.** Here the thought is carried yet farther. Not only shall the temple-pots be equal to sacrificial bowls, but every common pot in the city and throughout the land, will become as sacred as the utensils of the temple, and be freely used by all for sacrificial purposes. The substance of the thought is the same, only more emphatic. This now is repeated in the closing words, — **no more a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah.** כְּנַעֲנִי does not mean a *merchant*, as in Job xl. 6, Prov. xxxi. 24 (Targum, Aquila, Jerome, Grotius, Bunsen, Hitzig), for there are no indications that traders in Old Testament times frequented the holy courts for traffic; nor literal Canaanites by birth, such as Gibeonites and Nethinim, who were employed in the lower functions of the temple service (Drusius, V. Hoffman, Kliefoth), for these classes lost none of their former esteem after the restoration; but the term is used as an emblematic designation of godless members of the covenant nation. Canaan was cursed among Noah's children, and his descendants were under the ban (Deut. vii. 2, xx. 16, 17). To say that these should no more be found in the Lord's house, is simply to say that all its frequenters should be righteous and holy. Professor Cowles says, "Canaanite was the common Hebrew word for trafficker, merchant, — a business in bad repute among the Hebrews because so much associated with fraud and deceit. See Hos. xii. 7, 8." I am quite unwilling to believe that the voice of inspiration put such a stigma upon a necessary and honorable occupation as this explanation implies. Besides, to say that the love of filthy lucre shall no more pollute the sanctuary, is far less than to say that no form of sin of whatever kind shall be found there. Further, such a view is excluded by the obvious analogy between these two closing verses of Zechariah and the statements in the concluding passages of the Apocalypse, where it is plain that universal holiness is promised as the characteristic feature of the kingdom of God in its final consummation.

THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL.

1. As this chapter is by most sound interpreters admitted to be either as yet wholly unfulfilled, or else an ideal sketch of the experiences of centuries extending from the beginning to the end of the Christian dispensation, there is, of course, considerable vagueness in the view taken of its details. This, however, is no valid objection to its place in the canon. Prophecy was never intended to be simply history written in advance. Had it been such, its own ends would have been defeated. Its obscurity prior to fulfillment is a sure evidence of its genuineness. But the broad outlines which defy literal explanation, yet serve to indicate great principles, to disclose the springs of God's moral government, and to furnish useful hints for the guidance of his people, warning them against undue expectations and yet furnishing a sure basis for a reasonable and holy hope. Pictures of siege, assault, capture, plunder, and exile, as sure to occur in the future, forbid the least intelligent reader from forgetting that he belongs to the Church Militant, or from expecting a calm, steady, peaceful, equable advance of Zion to its destined prevalence over the earth. On the contrary, they show that trials of faith and patience must be encountered; that at times the whole outlook will be dark and discouraging; that Satan, like his angels of old in the case of the demoniacs, will fearfully convulse and rend the body from which he is doomed to be driven out. Such suggestions, therefore, however vaguely they may be expressed, furnish to believers real support in the season when the enemies of the truth seem to triumph, by reminding them that just this entered into God's providential purpose. On the other hand, the same prophecy shows the silver lining of the cloud, shows that the check of the true cause is only temporary. The brilliant representations of future and final triumph console and uphold in the greatest "fight of afflictions." And believers fall back upon the assurance of the Psalmist, "When the wicked spring as the grass and all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed forever" (xcii. 7).

2. *At evening time there shall be light.* This has come to be a watchword of the Church. The corresponding proverb of the world, "the darkest hour is just before day," has been questioned, both in its literal and its figurative aspects, and perhaps justly. But there is no question of the truth of

Zechariah's assertion. It is God's way to test the faith and patience of his people, to surround them with difficulties, to hedge up their way on every hand until they see and feel their own helplessness and dependence, and then He interposes in a signal manner. In the great trial of Abraham, when called to offer Isaac for a burnt-offering, the preparations had reached the last point, and the patriarch's arm was uplifted to strike the fatal blow, when the voice from heaven stayed his hand, and the believer gratefully exclaimed, "Jehovah Jireh = The Lord will provide." The experience of Abraham's descendants in Egypt led to the proverbial saying which the Rabbins have preserved for us, "When the straw fails, then comes Moses," or as the modern phrase is, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." When Lazarus was sick our Lord was informed of the fact in ample time to proceed to his bedside and arrest the disease, as He had often done in other cases, but He deliberately remained away on the other side of Jordan, and came to Bethany only when the grave had held its victim for days. This was not through coldness or carelessness, but, as He said, for the glory of God (John xi. 4, 40), in order that a miracle so transcendent might confirm the faith of his disciples and intensify yet more the love and joy of the sisters in their brother whom they received back from the tomb. And so in all cases, whether of individuals or communities, faith is sustained by the assurance that a day of clouds and gloom cannot last forever, that a change will occur just so soon as the purposes of the visitation are accomplished, and that it will come just when, according to the natural course of things, a starless night is about to set in. Earnest prayer was made by the Church for the imprisoned Peter (Acts xii. 5), but it was not until the very night before the day appointed for his execution that the angel of the Lord delivered him from his guards and fetters.

3. Water is a natural image of spiritual blessings, and especially of the chiefest of them all,—the influences of the Holy Spirit. The Psalmist speaks of a river whose streams make glad the city of God (xlvi. 4); Joel declares a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord and shall water the valley of Shittim (iii. 18); Isaiah promises, "I will pour floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (xliv. 3); but Ezekiel (xlvii. 1–12) furnishes a most striking parallel to Zechariah's prediction. He saw water issuing from under the sanctuary, an ever widening, deepening stream, which swept through the desert bearing fertility in its course, until it reached the Sea of Sodom, the standing symbol of desolation and death, and healed its stagnant waters, filling them with animal life and covering its banks with trees whose fruit was food and their leaves medicine. Our prophet sees living streams which issue in different directions from Jerusalem, and reach to either sea, east and west; and as they flow without intermission, winter and summer, they make the land a terrestrial Paradise with undying verdure and perpetual abundance. No one of these figurative descriptions, however large and varied, is overwrought or extravagant. They rather fall short of the reality. The blessed Spirit is the author of all the holiness in the world. He indeed uses means. The prophecies put Him in close connection with Jerusalem and the Temple. But the means depend upon Him, just as the best appointed ship makes no progress without a breeze. The Apostles were not allowed to engage in their work until the Spirit was poured out from on high, but when the effusion was felt, the feeblest of them spake as with a tongue of fire. The grand feature of the latter day is copious and continuous effusions of such grace,—no longer intermittent, or scanty, or of small extent, but radiating in all directions at once, permanently filling every channel, and limited only by the wants of the race. Wherever these living streams reach, the barren soil of nature is fertilized and the dead live again. Quickly but surely, with the same noiseless energy with which the great providential forces work, these spiritual agencies perform their office of reconstructing human society and changing the face of the world.

4. The consequence of such streams of blessing is a degree of consecration never seen before. The form in which the universal prevalence of holiness is expressed, is noteworthy. Men are not to become monks or anchorites, the ordinary conditions of human life are not to be reversed; but on the contrary the infusion of grace will be so large and general that every rank and class will feel it, and its effects will be seen in all the relations of life, purifying and elevating without upturning or destroying. In business, in recreation, in politics, in art, in literature, in social life, in the domestic circle, there will be a distinct and cordial recognition of the claims of God and of the supremacy of his law. There will be no divorce anywhere between religion and morality, no demand that any department of human activity shall be deemed beyond the domain of conscience. When even the bells on the horses bear the same sacred inscription which once flashed from the diadem of the High Priest, nothing can be found too small or too familiar to be consecrated to the Lord. The religious spirit will prevail everywhere, securing justice, truth, kindness, and courtesy among men; doing away with wars, contentions, jealousies, and competitions; hallowing trades and handicrafts; softening the inevitable contrasts of ranks, gifts, and conditions; binding men to one another by their devotion to a common master in heaven; and thus introducing the true city of God on earth for which all saints long with an ever increasing desire. The idea of such a commonwealth originated in the Scriptures, and it can be realized only in the way they point out. All schemes of political, social, or even moral reform, apart from the principles of the Word, are the merest chimeras. They are impossible of accomplishment, and if accomplished, would disappoint their projectors. True religion, restoring the Lord to his rightful place in human thought and action, alone furnishes the sanction, the authority, and the power by which men become what they ought to be to themselves, to each other, and to the community. The last Canaanite will perish from the earth, and the people shall be all righteous, when the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

BRADLEY: Vers. 6, 7. I. Mixed condition of the righteous in this world; in respect to their knowledge, their outward circumstances, their inward comforts, their wavering holiness. II. God's wisdom in allowing it; to subdue their corruptions, to exercise their graces, to bring them to dependence on Himself. III. Our consolation under it; God notices it, the mixed events work together for good, the scene is short. IV. The happy termination of all; in a state of unmingled good, in an

unexpected hour. Finally, Are we the people concerned in it?

HENGSTENBERG: Vers. 11. *Curse.* All the dreadful things that can possibly be thought of are included in this one word.

CALVIN: Ver. 12. The habitation of the godly is secure, not because they dread no attacks of foes, but because they firmly believe that they will be preserved by a power from above, even though the devil excites the peoples on all sides to contrive their ruin.

PAYSON: Vers. 20, 21. I. All common duties will be performed as seriously as solemn worship. II. Every building will be a house of God. III. Every day will be like a Sabbath. IV. Every meal will be what the Lord's Supper is now. V. Yet the distinctions which now prevail will be observed. VI. There will be no insincere worshippers. Infer (1.) How wretchedly we now live. (2.) See whether we have any religion or not. (3.) Learn what pursuits and pleasures are pleasing to God.

THE

BOOK OF MALACHI.

EXPOUNDED

BY

JOSEPH PACKARD, D. D.

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LEARNING IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA.

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MALACHI.[1]

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *The Prophet Malachi.*

The Prophet Malachi is the last of the series of prophets, who, through successive generations, for a thousand years, "had showed before of the coming of the Just one." Not only had this remarkable order of inspired men predicted the coming Messiah, but they lifted up their voice, like a trumpet, to show God's people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. They were the teachers and preachers of the generations in which they respectively lived, and were thus the prototypes of ministers of the Gospel.

It has been a subject of doubt, from a very early period, whether Malachi was the real *name* of the Prophet, or an official title. The Septuagint translates Malachi "his angel." The Targum regards Ezra as the author of the prophecy, and is followed in this opinion, with more or less confidence, by Jerome, Calvin, Hengstenberg, and Umbreit. "I am disposed to grant," says Calvin, "that the author was Ezra, and that Malachi was his surname, for God had called him to do great and remarkable things." "We shall not succeed," says Ewald, "in finding the real name of the writer." No one has so strenuously opposed the common opinion, that Malachi was the real name of the Prophet, as Hengstenberg, in his *Christology of the O. T.* (2d edition Martin's translation), vol. iv. 156–161. He labors to establish a connection between the name of the Prophet, and the same word as occurring in its official signification, "*my messenger*," in ch. iii. 1. He maintains, that the formation of the word, and the absence of any reference to his father, or the place of his birth, go to show that it was not a proper name. But, on the other hand, we have no account of the personal relations of Haggai, Habakkuk, and Obadiah. The formation of the word, as a proper name, is not without precedent, as in Naphtali, Zichri. It would be contrary to the analogy of the prophetical books, it would weaken the force of the prophecy, and cast some suspicion upon it, if we regarded it as anonymous. We consider it then with Hitzig, as a proper name, and as an abbreviation of Malachiah, *servant of Jehovah.*

The *time*, in which Malachi prophesied, has also been the subject of some difference of opinion. All are agreed, from the internal evidence, that it was after the exile, which is not mentioned in the book. The temple was rebuilt, its service, together with the sacrifices, and feasts and fasts, restored. Some are disposed to put the age of Malachi at a much later date than others. Dr. J. G. Murphy (Fairbairn's *Imperial Dictionary*, art. *Mal.*) maintains, that he may have lived till the time of Alexander the Great, 331 B. C. Hitzig (*Comm. on Minor Prophets*) conjectures, that he prophesied about 358 B. C. But as we find Malachi condemning the very same abuses, which Nehemiah found existing in his second visit to Jerusalem, we may reasonably conclude, that they were contemporaries, and sustain the same relations to each other, that Haggai and Zechariah did to Zerubbabel, and that Malachi prophesied from 440–410 B. C.

To understand the prophecy, we must glance at the *circumstances* of the Jews, in his time. They had returned from the exile, as we learn from Nehemiah, in "great affliction and distress." The period of the exile had been a painful and humiliating one. They had been in the furnace of affliction. From the prophecies of Isaiah, and other prophets, they had expected even more than the restoration of their former blessings, but instead of that, they were under Persian governors, "who had dominion over their bodies." Now, while the

[1] I have been more brief in the Preface to Malachi, than I desired, from the brief space allotted me. — J. P.

exile was a great blessing to them in many respects, as it cured them of idolatry, and produced some outward repentance at least, as the tears, which they shed at Ezra's exposition of the law, testified, yet from the disappointment of their fond hopes, they fell into an ungrateful, murmuring, self-righteous spirit, complaining of God's injustice to them, as though they had claims upon Him, and provoking his divine majesty by a denial of his justice, and providential government. We see in the state of mind and heart of the people, the germs of that Pharisaism and Sadduceeism, which were full-blown in the time of our Saviour. They had relapsed, too, into their old sins of marrying heathen wives, which Ezra had sternly prohibited, and labored to reform.

Bishop Lowth here remarks, "that Malachi is written in a mediocre style, which seems to indicate that the Hebrew poetry, from the time of the Babylonish captivity, was in a declining state, and being past its prime and vigor, was then fast verging towards the debility of age." Gesenius classes him also in the *silver* age of the Hebrew language, and thus decidedly inferior to the earlier writers. On the contrary, Ewald, who is a competent, and certainly unbiased judge, pronounces his style as not lacking in smoothness and elegance; and Kohler regards it as forcible and remarkably pure, for the time, in its diction and syntax, and his reasoning as concise and cogent. His descriptions of the original type of the priesthood, his prophecies of the sun of righteousness, of the Angel of the Covenant, and of the great and terrible day of judgment, are glowing and fervid. Ewald has remarked upon a peculiarity of his style — in his first laying down moral and religious axioms, as a foundation, and then reasoning from them, and refuting in the form of a dialogue any objections which might be brought against them. The prophecy of Malachi has been always regarded as one of great importance. The Church of Rome, it is well known, has found in the "pure offering," of Malachi i. 11, its principal proof-text of the doctrine of the Mass.

The contents of the prophecy are principally of a threatening character. After an introduction, in which the Prophet proves the love of God to the people, as the foundation of the following rebukes and exhortations, he turns, first of all to the priests, and threatens them with severe punishment for their open contempt of the law, and their unfaithfulness in their office.

The next rebuke is administered to those who had divorced their Jewish wives, in order to contract marriages with heathen wives. He rebukes the irreligion of the people, their denial of God's justice, and their withholding tithes and offerings. The Prophet assures them that the awful day of divine judgment, in which God will reward the righteous and punish the wicked, will surely come, and that God would graciously send his messenger Elijah the Prophet, before his coming.

The last words of the Old Testament, "The Angel of the Covenant, — Elijah the Prophet," have hardly died upon the ear, when John the Baptist, standing at the threshold of the New Testament, echoes the voice of Malachi, and cries out in the wilderness, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, as it is written in the Prophet, Behold, I send my messenger, before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before me."

§ 2. *Analysis of the Book.*

Most Commentators, following Jahn in his Hebrew Bible, and Introduction to the Old Testament, divide the prophecy into *six* sections.

1. Chap. i. 1–6. Introduction. Expostulation of Jehovah with Israel. He proves his distinguishing love by comparing their condition with that of Edom, and thus refutes their complaint, that he has not loved them.

2. Chaps. i. 6–ii. 10. Rebuke of the Priests, for their offering unlawful sacrifices, and thus profaning God's ordinances, for their perversion of the law. Prophecy of the pure and spiritual worship of Jehovah among the heathen.

3. Chap. ii. 10–16. Rebuke of unfaithfulness in the marriage relation by marrying heathen wives, and divorcing Israelitish wives.

4. The sending of Jehovah's messenger to prepare the way for the unexpected coming of the Messiah, to judge, but not utterly to destroy Israel (chaps. ii. 17–iii. 7).

5. Rebuke of the people for withholding the legal tithes and offerings, and thus defrauding God (chap. iii. 7–13).

6. Prediction of the destiny of the righteous and the wicked. Exhortation to observe the law. Another Elijah to come. Threatenings, if they do not repent and flee from the wrath to come, of a curse of utter destruction upon the land.

§ 3. *Unusual Words and Forms in Malachi.*

Chap. i. 3. תַּנּוֹת, for תַּנִּים. The verb, רֻשַּׁשׁ, i. 4. The combination of מֵעַל, with לְ, i. 5. The meaning of מִנְחָה, i. 10, 11–13; ii. 13; iii. 4. The word נִיב, i. 12. The verb נָכַל, i. 14; the form מָשְׁחָת, i. 14. The unusual meaning of מִצְוָה, ii. 1. The use of מַלְאָךְ ii. 7; iii. 1. The expression בַּת־אֵל נֵכָר, ii. 11. The proverb עֵר וְעֹנֶה, ii. 12; the expression, אֵשֶׁת בְּרִית, ii. 15. The form of the participle, שָׂנֵא, ii. 16; the title מַלְאַךְ הַבְּרִית, iii. 1; the word בֹּרִית, iii. 2; the construction in iii. 5, עֹשֵׁק שְׂכַר. The verb קָבַע, iii. 8; the proverb עַד־בְּלִי־דָי, iii. 10; the word קְדֹרַנִּית, used only in iii. 14; the proverb שֹׁרֶשׁ וְעָנָף, iii. 19; the verb עָסַס, iii. 21.

§ 4. *Literature.*

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THE PROPHET MALACHI.

SECTION I.

CHAPTER I. 1–5.

God's peculiar Love to Israel above Edom.

1 2 The burden[1] of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. I have loved[2] you,
saith the Lord. Yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us? *Was* not Esau Jacob's
3 brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his moun-
4 tains and his heritage waste for the dragons[3] [jackals] of the wilderness. Whereas
Edom saith, We are impoverished[4] [ruined], but we will return [again] and build
the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of Hosts, They shall build, but I will throw
down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against
5 whom the Lord hath indignation for ever. And your eyes shall see, and ye shall
say, The Lord will be magnified[5] [great is Jehovah] from[6] the border of Israel.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

(A new translation will be given at the end of the Commentary.)

1 Ver. 1.—מַשָּׂא דְבַר, found only together in Zech. ix. 1, xii. 1, followed by בְּ, עַל, אֶל, to determine its relation to the object.

2 Ver. 1.—The LXX. have inserted, before "I have loved": Lay to heart, or, consider, as in Haggai i. 7, ii. 15.

3 Ver. 3.—תַּנּוֹת, a fem. pl. for תַּנִּים (so Ewald, Reinke) from תַּן, Micah i. 8; Is. xiii. 22.

4 Ver. 4.—רֻשַּׁשְׁנוּ, pual of רָשַׁשׁ, to be destroyed, not from רוּשׁ, as our version makes it.

5 Ver. 5.—Great be Jehovah! praised as great and glorious. See Ps. xxxv. 27, xl. 17, where the same phrase occurs.

6 Ver. 6.—מֵעַל, over, above, Neh. iii. 28; Ecc. v. 7, not *beyond* the border, the land of Israel.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **The burden of the word of the Lord.** Some of the recent German Commentators, following Vitringa, understand by burden (מַשָּׂא) nothing more than a divine *speech*, *prophecy*, or *utterance*, so that it would mean, "the speech of Babylon, Damascus, Egypt, Moab," instead of the burden upon these countries. Jerome remarks: "The word *massa* is never placed in the title, save when the vision is heavy and full of burden and toil." In this interpretation he has been followed by Hengstenberg, who has fully discussed the subject, and by Köhler and Keil. Henderson has translated it *sentence*. The connection in the first verse with *word* shows that it means something more, or it would have been superfluous. Eleven times in Isaiah (xiii. 1; xiv. 28; xv. 1; xvii. 1; xix. 1; xxi. 1, 11, 13; xxiii. 1), in Ezekiel xii. 10; Hab. i. 1; Zech. ix. 1; xii. 1, it is followed by a prophecy of a threatening nature. In Jeremiah xxiii. 33, xxxiv. 36, the meaning burden, heavy prophecy is presupposed. The people, whenever they met the prophets, asked scoffingly, if they had received any new massa, or burden. "What is the burden of the Lord?" not believing that the predicted evil would come. As a punishment for their blasphemy God declares (ver. 39) "I will *burden* you." See Lange on Jeremiah xxiii. 33–40; Alexander on Isaiah xiii 1.

To Israel, not *concerning* Israel, but *to*, as אֶל shows. By Israel is meant here not the kingdom of Israel as distinct from that of Judah, but the small colony composed of all the tribes who had returned to Judæa after the Captivity, and thus became the central point of the divine promises and threatenings. Those who did not return lost the name of Israel, while those who did were called Israel by way of eminence, as those to whom the

promises were made. Nehemiah and Ezra use the word Israel in the same way.

By Malachi, *through* Malachi. The Hebrew is, *by the hand* of Malachi. Köhler, Ewald, and Delitzsch have discussed the question, whether the prophecy, as it now is, was delivered *orally* to the people, and have concluded that we have only the substance of the more copious oral addresses of the prophet, at different times, brought together into one single prophecy. The Septuagint, as we have already remarked in the Introduction, has translated it, ἐν χειρὶ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ, *by the hand of his angel*.

Ver. 2. **I have loved you, saith Jehovah.** The whole prophecy represents the relations of Jehovah to his people, first, as their Father and Lord, secondly, as their only God, and final Judge.

The Prophet introduces Jehovah as declaring his love to them, as the foundation of the rebukes, threatenings, exhortations, and promises, which follow. This love of Jehovah to them laid them under obligation to love Him in return, and to keep his commandments. It is because He loved the people that He rebuked and chastened them.

In reply to the people, who ask for proofs of Jehovah's love, he condescends to appeal to facts in their history, and in his dealings with them. that clearly prove this love. **Was not Esau a brother of Jacob's? saith Jehovah, yet I loved Jacob, and hated Esau.** The question is put in this way, and the names of Jacob and Esau mentioned, rather than those of Israel and Edom, to call attention to the fact, that, though they were brothers, and sustained the same relation to Jehovah, so that it might have been expected, that He would have dealt with both alike, yet He had not done so, neither in their own persons nor in their posterity, so that judging from the results we might regard the one as loved and the other as hated.

That the word *hate* is not used here in its strongest sense, is clear from several passages of Scripture, as where Leah says that she was hated by Jacob (Gen. xxix. 33), and in Deut. xxi. 15, where the case is put of a man's having two wives, one beloved and the other hated, and in Luke xvi. 13, where it is said of a servant with two masters, that he will hate the one and love the other, and Luke xiv. 26, compared with Matthew x. 37, where the hating one's father and mother is interpreted by loving less. St. Paul, in Rom. ix. 11, refers to Jacob and Esau as illustrations of the purpose of God, according to election. Their history typified and conditioned that of their posterity.

Ver. 3. **And his inheritance for the jackals of the desert.** We are not informed when and by whom this utter desolation of Edom took place. Jahn and Hitzig ascribe it to the Persians, so also Köhler; Keil and others to the Chaldæans, fulfilling thus the prophecies of Amos, Obadiah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

The word translated in the A. V. *dragons* should be rather translated, *jackals*, with the Jewish Commentators, and Ewald, Köhler, Umbreit, Reinke, Stier, Pressel. Our version follows Jerome, Luther, Calvin, Bochart, Cocceius, J. H. Michaelis, who translate it *serpents*, or *dragons*. The Septuagint translates it, δώματα ἐρήμου, *desert dwellings*, in which they are followed by De Wette (*Wöhnungen*), Gesenius, Maurer, Rosenmüller, Rödiger, Fürst, Henderson, and Noyes.

The word in this form is found only here. We regard it with Köhler, Keil, and others, as the feminine plural of תַּן. The masculine plural is found, Ps. xliv. 20; lxiii. 10; Is. xiii. 22; xxxiv. 13; xxxv. 7; xliii. 20; Jer. ix. 11; x. 22; xlix. 33; li. 37; Lam. iv. 3 (where it is strangely translated *sea monsters*); and is translated in our version *dragons*. In Isaiah xiii. 22, Micah i. 8, they are represented as *crying* and *wailing*, so they could not have been dragons, or serpents.

Ver. 4. **Whereas Edom saith,** or rather, *although Edom should say, we are ruined, but we will again rebuild the ruins,* **Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, or Jehovah of Sabaoth.** Hengstenberg has labored to show, in opposition to Gesenius, that Sabaoth is in apposition with Jehovah, and to be separated from it by a comma, as a special appellation of God. It is translated by the Septuagint, παντοκράτωρ (Almighty), twenty-four times in Malachi, and passes over into the New Testament in 2 Cor. vi. 18, *The Lord Almighty; the Almighty*, in Rev. i. 8; *Lord God Almighty*, Rev. iv. 8, and frequently.

While Israel was rebuilding its ruins, all the attempts of Edom to repair its desolations will prove abortive.

The border of wickedness. By the word *border* is meant here the *land*, with its inhabitants. When Edom fails to recover its former prosperity all men must acknowledge that it is a perpetual monument of God's wrath.

Ver. 5. **Great is Jehovah over the land of Israel.** Hitzig, Maurer, Ewald, Umbreit, Reinke, Noyes, Pressel, understand this clause to mean, that from the doom of Edom Israel will be forced to confess that Jehovah is not only great in Israel, but *beyond* its borders. Henderson, following Aben Ezra, connects, *from the border* of Israel with the *ye* of the preceding clause, *ye from the border of Israel*. But, as *beyond* is an unprecedented meaning of מֵעַל, as Israel had no doubt that Jehovah ruled beyond the borders of Israel, we had better understand it to mean, that Israel, by contrasting its condition with that of Edom, will be more deeply convinced that Jehovah's government of his people Israel was a gracious one. As the future precedes the subject it had better be translated, says Köhler, as an optative, May Jehovah be praised! but it is more congruous to the context to translate it, Great is Jehovah over the borders of Israel! as in Ps. xxxv. 27, where it is to be translated, Great is Jehovah! See Alexander and Delitzsch on the 35th Psalm, also on Ps. xl. 17, where the same words occur.

DOCTRINAL, HOMILETICAL, AND PRACTICAL.

W. Pressel: We cannot more correctly and fully express the meaning of these prophetic words, than the Apostle Paul has done in two passages in Rom. ix. 7, 11: "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children;" and, "Not of works, but of him that calleth:" for the Apostle as well as the Prophet recognizes in the relation of Esau and Jacob, and of the descendants of both, a striking example, that descent from one and the same patriarch is not the ground of one and the same election on the part of God, but that it is his free grace, which uses one as an instrument for the kingdom of God, and the other not, and according to which the one does not frustrate the saving purpose of God, through his want of faithfulness, and the other, in spite of all his efforts, does not obtain salvation for himself. And

yet, in the words of the prophet, as well as of the Apostle, the close connection of guilt on the part of the individual, with the rejection on the part of God, is also intimated. As much as in the Old Covenant the circle of revelation was limited, and necessarily so, to the people of Israel, so rich is this revelation, however, especially by the prophets in hints that the decree and glory of Jehovah should extend beyond the limits of Israel, if even at first only in the execution of his judgments, which were necessary to prepare the way among the heathen for the visitation of grace.

HOMILETICAL HINTS.

Ver. 2. As there lies in the address of Jehovah the key to the understanding of the history of our life, so there lies in the reply of Israel the key to the understanding of our hearts. The history of our life appears, according to it, as a history of love, wherein the bitter as well as the sweet have only our good for their end, and as a decree of love, according to which nothing is accidental, but all ordained from eternity. Our heart appears in it in its blindness, since though the proofs of God's love are very plain yet we fail to understand them, and in its ingratitude, and distrust the source of this blindness; or, the history of our life confirms to us what the Lord here testifies, and our perverse and desponding heart at least *thinks* what Israel here objects.

On ver. 3. May it be deeply impressed upon my heart what a happiness it is to be a Christian! for how does the heathen world appear to us, when we look at the blessings of Christianity! The heathen are by nature our brethren, as Edom was the brother of Israel, and yet what a waste and kingdom of Satan is the heathen world! In what light does Christianity appear to us, when we look at the curse of heathenism! What do we not enjoy in the knowledge of the love of God to us in Jesus Christ, and in communion with Him, and in all the blessings in heart and house, in the social and domestic circle, which flow to us therefrom, and yet how little have we deserved it, and how little is this blessing from step to step our work!

Ver. 4. The world's defiance of God's decree: It breaks down, He builds up; it builds, He breaks down.

On the whole section i. 1–6. The gracious election of God is the golden thread, which runs through not only the history of Israel, but through the whole history of the kingdom of God upon earth; but it is yet neither an "order of merit" for us, it rather humbles and disciplines, and spurs us on; it is only a cord of love by which the Lord draws us, while it brings destruction to those like the children of Edom. Love and hatred in the heart of God! What does the New Testament say to this prophetic expression? What does the history of the Church of Christ say to it? What does the witness of the Holy Ghost in our hearts say to it?

Ver. 5. *Then* and *now! Then*, the word of promise sounded, Great is the Lord beyond the limits of Israel! and the promise found its fulfillment in the history of the mission to the Gentiles. *Now*, the word of promise sounds, Great is the Lord among Israel! and the promise finds likewise its fulfillment in the history of the mission to the Jews.

E. Pocock, Professor of Hebrew in Oxford and Canon of Christ Church: "*I loved Jacob*," etc. The Apostle St. Paul, in Rom. ix. 11, improveth this argument from thence, that this love to the one and hatred to the other was declared, when those children were not yet born, so that it could not be said that one had deserved better than the other, and therefore his love to one above the other must needs appear to be of free grace and choice, electing one, and rejecting the other; and the distinction was both in their temporal and spiritual state. But the literal explication of the words requires no more than the particular effect of his love to Jacob's posterity and hatred to Esau's, here instanced in the utter desolation of Esau's country, and the restitution of Israel's, the punishment proving to the one utter destruction, to the other a fatherly chastisement.

[Bishop Wordsworth, representing another school in the Church of England, remarks on vers. 2, 3: The doctrine, taught by St. Paul in Rom. ix. 13, which has been much misrepresented and distorted by some Calvinistic teachers, may be illustrated by the divine words here. The love of God towards Jacob, as St. Cyril remarks, was not without foresight of Jacob's faithfulness and piety as compared with Esau. The hatred of God toward Esau, "a profane person, who despised his birthright," was certainly no arbitrary nor capricious passion. And if we extend these words to Edom, we find it bringing God's judgments on itself by its unmerciful and revengeful spirit towards Israel. See Ps. cxxxvii. 7; Is. lxiii. 1; Ob. 8. — P. S.]

SECTION II.

Chapters I. 6–II. 10.

Rebuke of the Priests.

6 A son honoreth[1] *his* father, and a servant his master: if then I *be* a father [but
if I am] where *is* mine honor? and if I *be* a master, where *is* my fear? saith the
Lord of Hosts unto you, O [ye] priests, that despise my name. And ye say,
7 Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer[2] [offering] polluted bread upon
mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table

8 of the Lord *is* contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, *It is* not evil.[3]
And if ye offer the lame and sick, *It is* not evil. Offer it now unto thy governor;
will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of Hosts?
9 And now, I pray you, beseech God that He will be gracious unto us: this hath
been by your means[4] [hand]; will he regard your persons? saith the Lord of
10 Hosts. Who *is there*[6] even among you [O, that there were one among you!] that
would shut the doors *for nought?*[7] Neither do ye kindle *fire* on mine altar for
nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept
11 an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going
down of the same my name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; and in every
place incense *shall be* offered unto my name, and [indeed, Keil and Köhler] a pure offer-
ing: for my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.
12 But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the Lord *is* polluted; and
13 the fruit thereof, *even* his meat, [its food] *is* contemptible. Ye said also, Behold,
what a weariness *is it!* and ye have snuffed [puffed] at it, saith the Lord of Hosts;
and ye brought that which was torn[8] [stolen], and the lame, and the sick; thus ye
brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord. But
14 [And] cursed *be* the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and
sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing[10] [an unsuitable animal]; for I *am* a great
King, saith the Lord of Hosts, and my name *is* dreadful among the heathen.

Chapter II.

1 And now, O ye priests, this commandment[11] [sentence, decree] *is* for you. If ye
2 will not hear, and if ye will not lay *it* to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith
the Lord of Hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your bless-
3 ings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay *it* to heart. Behold,
I will corrupt[12] [rebuke, as in ch. iii. 11; Ps. cvi. 9; Is. xvii. 13] your seed, and spread
dung upon your faces, *even* the dung of your solemn feasts; and *one* shall take
4 you away with it.[13] And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment
unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of Hosts. My
5 covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him *for* the fear
6 wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was
in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace
and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should
keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he *is* the
8 messenger of the Lord of Hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have
caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted[14] [or made void] the cove-
9 nant of Levi, saith the Lord of Hosts. Therefore have I also made you contempt-
ible and base before all the people, according as[15] [because] ye have not kept my
ways, but have been partial in the law.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 6.— יְכַבֵּד is not to be understood as Jussive, in the sense of a son *should* honor, but as a future of custom or usage. The suffix in כְּבוֹדִי, my honor, is objective, as in Gen. ix. 2; Ex. xx. 17; Ps. xc. 11.

2 Ver. 7.— The first clause is the answer to the last clause of ver. 6. מַגִּישׁ is used in Malachi ii. 12, iii. 3, and in Lev. ii. 8, Amos v. 25, of offering. קָרֵב, used in ver. 8: Offer it now to thy governor, is the more common word for offering.

3 Ver. 8.— No question. This greatly weakens its force.

4 Ver. 9.— Means (Hebrew יָד, hand.)

5 Ver. 10.— מִכֶּם, not causal, but emphatic, and partitive.

6 Ver. 10.— Who is there, etc., for: O, that there were! For the Hebrew idiom, expressing a wish, see Ps. iv. 7; 2 Sam. xv. 4, xxiii. 15; Job xix. 23.

7 Ver. 10.— חִנָּם, to no purpose, not gratis.

8 Ver. 13.— גָּזוּל, stolen, not torn.

9 Ver. 13.— מַתְּלָאָה for מַה־תְּלָאָה.

10 Ver. 14.— מָשְׁחָת. Fem. Part. Hophal. The old versions, and many modern commentators, punctuate it with a final Kamets, as masculine. It occurs in this form in Prov. xxv. 26. It corresponds to זָכָר, male.

11 Ch. 2, ver. 1.— מִצְוָה, sentence.

12 Ver. 3.— גֹּעֵר. This verb, translated "corrupt," occurs twelve times elsewhere, and is always translated: rebuke.

13 Ver. 8.— לָכֶם. Dative of disadvantage.

14 Ver. 8.— שִׁחַת, to make void.

15 Ver. 9.— כְּפִי, because (De Wette, *dafür*) (Köhler, *Dieweil*).

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 6. **A son honoreth his father**, etc. Jehovah expostulates with the priests for the unnaturalness of their disobedience. They stood in a peculiar relation to Him, were under peculiar obligations to sanctify Him in the eyes of the people, and yet they had profaned his name, and made Israel to sin. Jehovah begins with an indisputable moral principle. No one would deny that a son was bound to love and obey a father, and a servant to fear and obey his master. **But if I am a father.** He speaks in a conditional form, though Israel could not deny it, as though He would leave it to Israel to acknowledge Him as such or not. Jehovah was the Father of Israel, and Ephraim was his son. He was without dispute their master.

My honor, my fear. The suffixes are used here in an objective sense, the honor due me, the fear of me. The priests, instead of confessing their guilt, with hypocritical self-righteousness deny the charge of despising Jehovah's name, and demand the proofs of this charge. **Yet ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?** A new sentence should begin with this clause.

The answer to this question is to be found in the first clause of ver. 7: **Offering polluted bread.** This we regard, with Maurer and Ewald, as an answer to the question proposed in the last clause of the preceding verse. By *bread* is meant here not the *shew bread*, which was not offered upon the altar, but any sacrifices, as the mention of the blind and lame shows. Sacrifices are often called in the law, the bread or food of God; Lev. xxi. 6, 8, 17, 21, 22; xxii. 25; Num. xxviii. 2; Lev. iii. 11, 16. The bread is called impure, or polluted, because it does not correspond to the claims of God and to his law, which forbade the offering of a sacrifice with any blemish, such as blindness, or lameness, or any evil-favoredness; Lev. xxii. 20, 25; Deut. xv. 21. To pollute Jehovah is to offer polluted sacrifices. In proof of the charge against the priests, which they denied, Jehovah refers to what they said and did. They represent the altar as contemptible by their practice of offering sacrifices expressly forbidden.

The words, *There is no evil*, are not to be taken as a question, this would weaken their force, but are used in the sense of the priests, and in the mouth of the prophet are words of angry rebuke and bitter irony.

Ver. 8. The prophet now uses an *argumentum ad hominem*, to show that they had treated Jehovah with less respect than they would have treated any human governor. **Offer it now to thy governor.** The word translated, *governor*, is found in Jer. li. 28; 1 Kings x. 15; Neh. ii. 7; v. 14, and means a heathen governor of a province. To accept a person, is to be favorably disposed towards any one, to espouse his cause.

Ver. 9. **And now I pray you, beseech God,** etc. The prophet proceeds to make an application of the illustration in ver. 8. If the governor will not receive worthless gifts, how much less will Jehovah!

The challenge to the priests to beseech God has been regarded by Jerome, J. H. Michaelis, and Hitzig, as an earnest call to repentance, and prayer for God's mercy. But as the parenthesis (*This has been by your hand!*) most naturally means, Such sins have been committed by you! and seems to be inserted to reiterate the charge, and silence any reply; as the question, *Will he accept your persons?* intimates that God will not do so, which is never the case where there is sincere prayer for his mercy, and as the next verse expresses a wish that the doors of the Temple were altogether closed, it is better to regard it with Calvin, Maurer, Ewald, Keil, Köhler, and Henderson, as conditional, and with a shade of irony. Should you intercede with God, will He accept any? The Septuagint puts it in the first person: "*Shall I accept of you your persons?*" The word מִכֶּם is understood by Keil and Köhler as meaning, *on your account*, but it is better to regard it, with the LXX. and Maurer, as partitive and emphatic: *No one of you.* The prophet adds: **Thus saith Jehovah Sabaoth**, that we may not forget that what he says was inspired of God.

Ver. 10. **Who is there among you**, or rather, **O, that some one among you would even shut the doors of the temple!** The first clause is to be explained in accordance with a well-known Hebrew idiom as a wish, 2 Sam. xv. 4; xxiii. 15; Ps. iv. 7; Job xix. 23. Jehovah is so provoked by their illegal offerings, and the spirit which actuated them, that He would gladly see his whole worship discontinued. גַּם, though placed first, belongs to the whole sentence, and is emphatic. By the doors are meant the folding doors, which led from the outer court to the court of the priests, where was the altar of burnt offerings. The reason for this wish is given, that the priests may not light a fire uselessly, to no purpose, upon Jehovah's altar. The *for nought*, in the first clause in our version, is unnecessary. Jehovah characterizes their sacrifices as vain, because they did not accomplish their end. Jerome, Grotius, Henderson, understand by it *in vain, gratis*, without payment, and refer it to the avaricious disposition of the priests; but it is better to consider it to mean, *without an object*. **An offering** (מִנְחָה), by this is meant not the unbloody sacrifice of fine wheat-flour, mentioned in Lev. ii. 1–15, but all kinds of sacrifice, as the context shows where only animal victims are spoken of, and from its use in this sense in Gen. iv. 4, where Abel's sacrifice of a lamb is called מִנְחָה, 1 Sam. ii. 15; Isaiah i. 13; Zeph. iii. 10.

Ver. 11. **For from the rising of the sun, etc.** In contrast with the sacrifice which Jehovah rejects, he declares, that the hour is coming when the true worshippers, not in Jerusalem only but in *every* place, shall offer a pure, a sincere offering in spirit and truth, and a living sacrifice of their souls and bodies to the name of Jehovah, which has been despised. What an insight into the most distant future! How much is involved in this prophecy? The kingdom of God taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles, the abrogation of the old dispensation wherein the worship of the Father was confined to one place (Deut. xii. 13), the coming of the hour "when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth:" the universal spread of Christianity. This prophecy is regarded by some of the Jewish Commentators, and by the Septuagint, and by Hitzig, Ewald, Maurer, Umbreit, and Köhler as a declaration of what was already the fact among the heathen who worshipped ignorantly the unknown Jehovah, under different names. If so, it would amount to the lines in Pope's universal Prayer: —

> "Father of all! in every age,
> In every clime adored,
> By saint, by savage, and by sage,
> Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!"

In opposing this view we first deny the fact. So far from the name of Jehovah being great among the heathen, and a pure worship offered Him, they were sunk into the most abominable and inexcusable idolatry, they worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is God over all, blessed forever! It would be in conflict with other prophecies, Isaiah xi. 10; Zeph. ii. 11. Zech. ix. 10; Is. lxvi. 20, and many others, which speak of such a worship as in the *future*.

Pocock, speaking of this Jewish interpretation, adopted by Ewald and others, well says, "What is it less than even an *excuse*, or *apology* for. if not a *commendation* of idolaters, and idolatry, as from the mouth of God himself, who all along showed them and their ways to be all most abominable to him."

By incense is here meant prayer, of which it is a frequent symbol. This is admitted by the Roman Catholic commentator, Reinke, who observes. "that Malachi could not refer to literal incense is evident from the fact that the offering of incense could only take place in the temple." If this is true of incense, why is it not true of the offering in the same sentence, associated with it here and in the law (Lev. ii. 15)? Yet Reinke understands it with the Church of Rome, as referring to the "bloodless sacrifice of the New Testament, the holy sacrifice of the Mass." It is well known that the Church of Rome makes use of this text as its principal proof-text for the doctrine of the Mass. "That in the Mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead." In the *Canons of the Council of Trent*, Sess. 22, we read, "that the Mass is that pure sacrifice which the Lord predicted by Malachi should be offered to his name in every place."

Whately remarks of such a use of Scripture to support certain practices, that "*the misinterpretation has sprung from the doctrine.*" The doctrine has arisen first, and then the texts of Holy Writ are assigned to support it.

> "In religion,
> What error, but some sober brow
> Will bless it and approve it with a text?"

The Church of Rome appeals here as elsewhere, to the almost unanimous consent of the Fathers. We may spend a little time in showing the unfairness of such an appeal, by quoting the principal passages in which they refer to this verse. They were governed by no fixed rules in their interpretation of Scripture, and were in the habit of accommodating every text which came to hand, to serve their purpose. An important distinction should be made between their *interpretation* and *application* of texts. They were given to a florid and ornate style, and their *rhetoric* has often been converted into *logic*. Köhler has very briefly brought together the principal passages from the Fathers, a synopsis of which we here give. Justin Martyr speaks of "the heathen offering to God, according to Malachi i. 11, the bread and cup of thanksgiving," but he proceeds to explain it, as used by metonymy for the true sacrifice of prayer and praise.

Irenæus also refers one passage to the elements of the Lord's Supper, but only in the sense, "that Christians *symbolically* offer bread and wine to God in proof of their thankfulness, and after the offering pray the Holy Ghost that he would render them the body and blood of Christ, so that those who received them might obtain forgiveness of their sins and eternal life." Irenæus regards faith, obedience, praise, righteousness, and prayer as the true sacrifices.

Origen, on Prayer, proves from our passage, "that every place is adapted to prayer."

The Apostolic Constitutions require "the faithful to assemble for prayer on the Lord's day, in order that, according to Malachi, their sacrifice may be acceptable to God."

Eusebius *Pamphilus* sees in Malachi i. 11 a prophecy of the abrogation of the Jewish ritual, "while Christians would offer to God the sacrifices of love, prayer, and *remembrance* of the great sacrifice. *ἡ μνήμη τοῦ μεγάλου θύματος.*"

Jerome, in his Commentary, explains this passage as, "*spirituales victimæ sanctorum orationes Domino offerendæ.*"

Augustine understands it of "works of mercy either to ourselves or to others." "We ourselves are the best and noblest sacrifice." He speaks of the Lord's Supper as shadowing forth the self-sacrifice of the Church to its Lord.

Chrysostom quotes this passage in proof, that the worship of God in spirit and truth should take the place of the Jewish service. He calls the Lord's Supper only so far a sacrifice, as by the invocation of the Holy Ghost, the body and blood of the Lord are present for the enjoyment of the believers.

Cyril Alex., understands by this text in Malachi "the sacrifices of faith, hope, love, and good works which the heathen in the future shall offer."

We thus see with what justice the Church of Rome appeals to the Fathers, and from this case we may judge of others, *ab uno disce omnes.* There is not the slightest warrant to suppose any allusion to the Lord's Supper in this verse; nothing is more common than to use sacrificial terms borrowed from the Old Testament ritual, in a spiritual sense, of the sacrifices of praise and good works, of the royal priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, and of the bodies of believers as living sacrifices.

Ver. 12. **But ye profane it.** The prophet renews the charge of ver. 7 against the priests, that they profane the name of the Lord by offering defective animals.

And the fruit thereof, even its food. *Its* provision, that is, of the table, or altar, even *its* food.

Ver. 13. **Ye say also, Behold what weariness!** Instead of regarding their service at the altar as an honorable privilege, they look upon it as an oppressive drudgery. **Ye snuff at it,** you show without any concealment and publicly your contempt.

Ye bring that which was torn, or rather **plundered.** Two bringings are mentioned, the first preparatory to the second, when the victim was presented, ready for sacrifice. The verse closes with an appeal to the priests, as in ver. 8, as to Jehovah's acceptance of such sacrifices.

Ver. 14. **And cursed be the deceiver.** The ו here should be translated, **And cursed, cursed be he,** who, when the law requires a male, brings one of less value. The law permitted and enjoined sacrifices of female animals in some cases (Lev. iii. 1; iv. 32; v. 6).

We had better understand *corrupt* or blemished, (as in Lev. xxii. 25), with Keil and Köhler, as masculine, and not as feminine, as Ewald, Maurer, Hitzig, and regard the curse as pronounced upon any one who redeemed his vow with an inferior animal.

The argument by which this rebuke is enforced is, that Jehovah is a great king, "*Rex tremendæ majestatis,*" and must therefore be served with reverence and godly fear.

Chap. ii. 1. **And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you.** The rebuke to the priests is now followed by a threatening of the punishment which would ensue, if they did not repent. The word מִצְוָה, commandment, is to be understood as in Nahum i. 14 in the sense of *decree, sentence.*

Ver. 2. **I will curse your blessings.** This has been understood by De Dieu, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, in the sense of *revenues.* Keil and Köhler interpret it of the blessings pronounced upon the people by the priests; these God will turn into curses; but it is not necessary to depart from the common and general sense of the word. **Yea, I have cursed them.** This is not a simple emphatic repetition of the proceeding "I will curse, as the LXX. (Κατάρασομαί), the Targum, Vulgate, Hitzig, Umbreit, Reinke, and Henderson maintain, but as the וְגַם requires, is to be understood of what has already taken effect, the curse has begun. So Ewald, Keil, Köhler. The singular suffix attached to blessings is distributive, referring to every blessing.

Ver. 3. **Behold I will rebuke your seed.** *For you the seed,* is emphatic. In chap. iii. 11 we find the same word גָּעַר used in the promised blessing. *I will rebuke the devourer,* or the locust. In Joel i. 13 the priests are called upon to lament for the meat-offering withholden, because the seed is rotten. In Haggai ii. 17 we find, "I smote you with blasting and mildew." The passage in Joel shows, that though the priests did not till the ground, yet they were dependent for their tithes upon the harvest, so if the seed was cursed they would themselves suffer. This renders it unnecessary to change the punctuation of זֶרַע (seed) to זְרֹעַ (arm), with the LXX., Vulgate, Ewald, Reinke, Keil, Köhler, Pressel. Köhler has a peculiar view, that it refers to the arm which the priests raised to bless the people, but the hand would more naturally have been mentioned. It is understood by other Commentators to refer to the perquisite of the priests — the *shoulder,* but they were entitled not only to the shoulder but to other parts (Deut. xviii. 3; Lev. vii. 32).

Still further to show how displeasing the conduct of the priests was in his eyes, Jehovah threatens that the dung of the victims, which was to be burned without the camp (Ex. xxix. 14; Lev. xvi. 27), should be spread on their faces.

And ye shall be carried to it. This clause has been differently understood, some making the dung the nominative, as the Vulgate, Luther, Calvin, Ewald, Reinke, Bunsen; others, *Jehovah.* It is better to regard the subject as indefinite, they, some one — the people, as in John xv. 6. "*They* shall gather them, and cast them into the fire," or, more according to our idiom, it is to be translated *ye shall be taken away with,* or *to* it, where it is deposited, ye shall be treated as dung, as God said to Jeroboam (1 Kings xiv. 10). The LXX. have, "I will take you to the same."

Ver. 4. **Ye shall know that I have sent this sentence,** etc. The word *commandment* is to be understood as in the first verse, as *sentence, decree of punishment.*

That my covenant may continue with Levi. Different interpretations have been put upon this sentence. Ewald, Reinke, Henderson, Rosenmüller translate it, *Because my covenant was with Levi.* Hitzig, Maurer, De Wette, Noyes, *That my covenant might remain with Levi.*

The view more generally adopted and advocated by Luther, Calvin, Umbreit, Keil, Köhler, Pressel, is, that *my covenant* is the predicate, and that the decree of punishment is to be henceforth God's covenant, *that* according to which he should deal with Levi, or the priests; the decree of punishment shall take the place of the earlier covenant with the priests. The objections to this interpretation are, that it is not plain and simple; that a different form of expression would have been made use of had this been the meaning, such as — My decree shall be *instead of* my Covenant; that covenant is immediately after used in its common sense; and that Levi, or the priesthood, is regarded as one throughout.

We may understand it as an elliptical construction. This decree is sent to you, that by your laying it to heart my covenant may be, may *continue* to be with Levi, as it was in the beginning, which he goes on to speak of; that you may not make null and void the covenant made in the beginning with Levi, and which Jehovah would have continued in his posterity.

Ver. 5. **My covenant with him was** (of) **life and peace,** etc. Jehovah now speaks of the nature of the covenant made with Levi, or the priesthood, in order to contrast the character of the priests with that of their pious predecessors.

My covenant with him was life and peace. These nouns are not in the genitive, as the Septuagint, Vulgate, and the English Version make them, but are the nominative of the predicate. It is not necessary to confine this description to Phinehas, as Henderson does, though in Num. xxv. 12 they are specially addressed to him.

And I gave them to him for fear. The design of the Covenant was to inspire him with holy fear and reverence. *For fear,* put by metonymy for the effect of fear; and the original priesthood corresponded to this divine intention: **And he reverenced my name.**

Ver. 6. **The law of truth was in his mouth,**

etc. His exposition of the law was according to truth, its true nature, and there was found in him no perverseness, no self-seeking, nor partiality. Thus he walked in most intimate and endearing communion with Jehovah, as did Noah and Enoch, in integrity of heart and life, and by his faithful instructions and warnings turned many to righteousness. Thus he fulfilled the design of the priesthood, which was to expound and apply to every case the will of God, as expressed in his law, and to be always ready to instruct the people. It was for this end the priesthood was appointed of God.

Ver. 7. The priest is an angel, or messenger of Jehovah to negotiate the grand concerns of judgment and of mercy. This is the only passage, with the exception of Haggai i. 14, where it is applied to the prophet, where we meet with such an application. Elsewhere it is applied to the Angel of the Lord, the Angel of the Presence, the Angel of the Covenant, in whom God revealed Himself, and through whom He transacted with man from the beginning.

Ver. 8. **But ye have departed from the way.** Jehovah now reminds the priests how very different they were from their pious fathers. They had respect of persons; they had taught for hire (Micah iii. 11). By their example and false expositions of the law they had misled many, and plunged them into sin, guilt, and perdition. They had made the law itself, instead of being a light and lamp to the people, a stumbling-block. As a just retribution for their sin, Jehovah will abandon them to the contempt of all Israel. *According*, in our version, should be rather, *because*.

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL.

Matthew Henry: "Nothing profanes the name of God more than the misconduct of those whose business it is to do honor to it."

Chap. ii. 7 (1). What is the duty of ministers? The priests' lips should keep knowledge, not keep it *from* his people, but keep it *for* them. Ministers must be *men of knowledge*, for how are they able to teach others the things of God who are themselves *unacquainted* with these things, or unready in them? They must *keep knowledge*, must furnish themselves with it, and retain what they have got, that they may be like the *good householder*, who *brings out of his treasury things new and old*. Not only their *heads*, but their *lips* must *keep knowledge*; they must not only have it but they must have it *ready*, must have it *at hand*, must have it, as we say, at their tongues' end, to be communicated to others, as there is occasion.

(2.) What is the duty of the people? *They should seek the law at his mouth;* they should consult the priests, and not only hear the message, but ask questions upon it, that they may the better understand it. We must not only consult the written Word, but must have recourse to God's messengers' and desire instruction and advice from them in the affairs of our souls, as we do from physicians and lawyers concerning our bodies and estates.

Ver. 8. The feeling of proper reverence for God and the services of his altar would indeed alone have dictated that what was offered to him should be the best and most perfect of its kind. Even the heathen were sensible of this propriety, and were careful that their victims were without blemish or imperfection. Thus, Homer in the *Iliad*, i. 66, makes Achilles propose to consult some priest, prophet, or interpreter of dreams to know whether the angry Apollo might not be, "Soothed with steam of lambs or goats unblemished." Cowper's *Transl.*)

Maimonides says: "There were no less than fifty blemishes, enumerated by him, which rendered an animal unfit to be offered on the Lord's altar."

Wordsworth: On ver. 7. *The priest's lips should keep knowledge*, a memorable statement. The offering of sacrifices was indeed an essential part of the priestly office; but Malachi declares that all sacerdotal sacrifices are of no avail without religious knowledge, sound learning, and wholesome teaching. The first duty of the Levitical Priests,—and how much more of the Christian!—was to keep, or preserve knowledge; the knowledge of God as revealed in his holy Word, and so to discharge their sacred office, that, according to the Word of God, the people should resort to them for instruction in holy things, and not resort in vain, and unless this was done by them all their offerings and sacrifices were nugatory, and God would "spread dung on their faces," in token of his displeasure. Here is a solemn warning to the Christian clergy. If such was the duty of the Levitical priesthood, and such the penalty of not performing it aright, how much more imperative is the obligation of the Christian Priest to "keep knowledge," and to instruct the people in sound doctrine; or, as St. Paul expresses it, "to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine, to meditate on these things, and give himself wholly to them," to speak the things which become sound doctrine, to hold fast the faithful word, so that he may be able by sound doctrine to convince the gainsayers. And how much surer will be his punishment if he fails to discharge it! It is to be feared that this warning is greatly needed at the present day. The clergy of the Eastern Church, especially in Asia and Greece, have been degraded to a low condition with regard to religious and secular knowledge. Celebrated Roman Catholic writers deplore the ignorance of a great part of their clergy, consisting of mere illiterate Mass-Priests. See Dr. Dollinger's *The Church and the Churches*.

In Protestant Germany the theological chairs of the universities are filled by those who have no pastoral experience in the cure of souls, and have none of that wisdom which is found at the side of sick beds and death-beds, and in church-yards at the grave, and have no mission from Christ, and no unction from the Holy Ghost; and many among them treat the Holy Scriptures as if they were a mere common book. Hence the theological teaching of the Schools has been divorced from the Christian Priesthood."

W. Pressel: The requisition of the Old Covenant that the sacrifices offered should be unblemished and perfect, and that by a defective sacrifice the altar of God and the offerer himself were polluted, grew out of the truth which Malachi here in most convincing language represents to the priests, that defective offerings betray a defective disposition, a want of reverence for the Holy God. In the New Covenant, where all sacrificial worship has ended, this rebuke applies to all divided service of God, to all half Christianity, and to all those Christians, who, not influenced by reverence of the Holy One, and by earnestness in sanctification, think to discharge their Christian duty by certain ceremonies or good works. Where this is the case with ministers of the Gospel there

is, as in the case of the Priests, double guilt, partly because they preach what they themselves do not practice, and partly, because they thereby cause a special scandal. The motives of the majesty of God, the example of the first priests, and the dignity of their calling to be a messenger of Jehovah, apply with no less force to those under the New Covenant. These arguments will have little effect, where personal thankfulness to God for his great love to us in Christ, and concern for our salvation through Him are wanting, but where they animate ministers of the Gospel, they must urge them to fulfill more truly and actively their high calling.

HOMILETICAL REMARKS BY PRESSEL.

The close connection of the first and fourth commandments. He only, who has a lively sense of the presence of his God and Father, will honor and obey the fourth commandment, and he only, who knows what an earthly Lord and Father must require of his own, will feel himself impelled to obey the first commandment. In what way can we now pollute the table of the Lord? (1.) In the *Sacrament*, when we ourselves partake of it unworthily, or do not enough arouse the consciences of others. (2.) *In life*, when we allow in ourselves or in others committed to us, a half-way devotedness to the Lord.

How far does the seventh verse apply to a minister of the Gospel? He is still a Priest, so far as he should point to the sacrifice on Golgotha, and should bear his Church upon his interceding heart, and should bless them in the name of Jesus Christ. He is still a messenger of God to those committed to him, and should preserve his Word in the Church, should teach young and old out of it, and should testify fearlessly and faithfully what the Lord bids him testify.

SECTION III.

Against unlawful Divorce, and Marriages with Heathen Wives.

CHAPTER II. 10–16.

10 Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal
treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our
11 fathers? Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Is-
rael and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the [holy people] of the Lord,
12 which he loves, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The Lord will
cut off the man that doeth this, the *master and the scholar* [*the waker and the an-
swerer*], out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the
13 Lord of Hosts. And this have ye done *again* [*as a second thing*], covering the altar
of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regard-
14 eth not the offering any more, or receiveth *it* with good will at your hand. Yet ye
say, Wherefore [*doth he not accept*]? Because the Lord hath been witness between
thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet *is*
15 she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one
[*flesh*]? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he
might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal
16 treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel,
saith that he hateth [I hate divorce] putting away; for *one* covereth violence with
his garment [covers his garment with cruelty], saith the Lord of Hosts: therefore
take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 10.— בָּגַד to deal treacherously, to be unfaithful, is used in vers. 11, 14, 15, 16.

2 Ver. 11.— בַּת is used here, as often, in the sense of worshipper, or servant. קֹדֶשׁ means here, holy seed, not holiness, as Henry, Scott.

3 Ver. 12.— יַכְרֵת jussive form. The master and the scholar. So Vulgate. A proverb like: *none shut up or left* (Deut. xxxii. 36); *the deceiver and the deceived* (Job xii. 16; Job xviii. 19); *son nor nephew*, to express totality by opposites. Out of the tents, is to be connected with "cut off."

4 Ver. 16.— The perfect with vav con. must here be translated as imperative, as in 1 Kings ii. 6.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

We have here a new subject without any connection with what precedes. The Prophet, in the name of Jehovah, rebukes their marriages with foreigners, and their divorce of their lawful wives. As his manner is, he first lays down an indisputable axiom as the basis of his reproofs.

Ver. 10. **Have we not all one Father?** Jerome, Calvin, and others understand by one father here, Abraham: Pocock, Scott, and Henry, Jacob. The obvious objection to this view is that Abraham was the father not of the Jews only, but of the Ishmaelites and Edomites. The best recent Commentators understand by it Jehovah. This makes it parallel with chap. i. 6, where Jehovah styles himself the Father of Israel.

Divorce is a violation of the relation sustained to Jehovah, as a common father, and it is dealing treacherously with our fellow creature, one against another (literally, a man against his brother); it is further a profanation of the covenant which Jehovah made with his chosen people, out of which there grew specific duties and obligations not to marry idolatresses, or the daughters of a strange God. The Prophet classes himself with the offenders, as it was a national sin. The Septuagint has changed the suffixes here, "Has not one God created YOU? Why have YE forsaken," etc.

The law of Moses prohibited all marriages with the heathen, lest the Israelites should be led into idolatry (Ex. xxxiv. 11; Deut. vii. 1-4).

Ver. 11. **Judah hath dealt treacherously.** He now proceeds to specify their sins. Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem are here only different designations of the same persons. Jerusalem is probably mentioned, to show that the sin was aggravated by being committed in the holy city.

The Prophet stigmatizes their unlawful divorce as an *abomination*, and as such to be classed with idolatry, witchcraft, and adultery. In the last clause he characterizes their intermarriages with the daughters of a strange god (or worshippers, by a well-known Hebrew idiom), as a profanation of the holy seed (Ezra ix. 2), for Israel was holiness to the Lord (Jer. ii. 3).

Ver. 12. **Jehovah will cut off,** etc. The Prophet denounces the judgment of Jehovah upon every one out of the tents of Jacob, who commits this sin. We must connect "out of the tents of Jacob" with cut off."

The apocopated form of the future expresses a wish that such may be the case. To express the universality of this judgment that *no one* should escape, not even in their posterity, we have a proverbial phrase, which has been variously interpreted. Our version has translated it, *the master and the scholar*, as the Vulgate, *magistrum et discipulum*. This too is the Rabbinical explanation followed by Luther, Pocock, Henry, Scott. Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Maurer, Reinke, Keil, Noyes, Henderson, De Wette, J. D. Michaelis, translate it, *the watcher and the answerer*. Calvin understands it of the *master and servant*: "Every one who was in power, and could command others," and by the *answerer*, "the servant, who received and obeyed orders." The Targum, Syriac, Ewald, *son* and *grandson*. Fürst, Munster, Hitzig, Dietrich, *the caller and the answerer*.

Ver. 13. **And this ye do as a second thing.** Henderson understands this of *time*, that the people had relapsed into their old sins in the time of Ezra, but it is better to understand it of a *second sin*, in addition to marrying heathen wives, of divorcing their Jewish wives. The Septuagint reads it, *I hated*, and mistook the word.

The greatness of their sin is enlarged upon Their divorced wives repair to the altar of Jehovah, there to pour out their hearts before Him, and to complain of their cruel treatment, and to seek his help. The last clause of ver. 13 shows that Jehovah will not accept the sacrifice, nor bless the worshipper

Ver. 14. **Yet ye say, wherefore?** That is, wherefore doth He not accept?

The people addressed refusing to be ashamed, and to confess their guilt, shamelessly ask the reason of their rejection. The Prophet now addresses each one personally. **Jehovah has been a witness.** Köhler understands this, as in Malachi iii. 5, of an *avenging* witness, but as we have in Gen. xxxi. 48 a similar expression. "*This heap is a witness between me and thee,*" where the same words occur in Hebrew, we must regard it with Keil, Henderson, and others, as meaning that God was a witness to the marriage, or to the covenant made between the parties. The divorced wife is now tenderly called the wife of thy youth, who has been the choice of thy youth, the partner of thy joys and sorrows, and the wife of thy covenant, with whom thou didst make a covenant for life.

Ver. 15. **But did not he make one only. And yet had he a residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? He sought a godly race.** We come now to the most difficult verse of all others in the prophecy. There has been an extraordinary difference of opinion as to its construction and sense. Köhler styles it most justly a *crux interpretum*. The Septuagint translator seems to have given his understanding a holiday, and made his pen supply its place. Not a spark of light can be struck from the words, and nothing but words. The subject under discussion is *divorce*. In the preceding verse, to add sanctity to the marriage tie, Jehovah is said to have been a witness of it, and the wife is to be regarded as bound by a solemn covenant to the husband. What more natural now than that the prophet should recall the institution of marriage in the beginning, as of divine sanction? This would be a conclusive argument, and is the very one our Saviour made use of, when speaking of divorce, "Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be ONE FLESH, wherefore, they are no more twain, but *one flesh*." The argument is introduced abruptly. **Did not Jehovah make one?** The word אֶחָד, to a Jew, perfectly familiar with בָּשָׂר אֶחָד in Genesis, would immediately suggest the one *flesh*, the one *pair*, of Gen. ii. 24.

And wherefore one? In the Hebrew, *one* has the article, הָאֶחָד, and must be understood of the same subject with the preceding, אֶחָד. **And wherefore did he make one pair? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit?** This applies most naturally to the life-giving spirit of God—his creative power, not exhausted, for He might have made many women for one man.

That he might seek a godly seed. The design of God was to perpetuate a godly seed. This is counteracted by frequent divorce.

Most English commentators adopt this interpretation Another view has been advocated by Jerome, Ewald, Reinke, Böttcher, and others, which makes Jehovah the *subject*, instead of the *object*. They are led to this view by verse 10, "*Hath not one God created us?*" They therefore translate it, "And did not ONE (the same God) create them, And what did the ONE seek?"

Another class of commentators refer the one to *Abraham*, and translate the clause, **But did not the single one do it?** *And yet a divine Spirit remained to him. But what did the single one do?* They regard *the one* as a designation of *Abraham*, and found their opinion on Isaiah li. 2, *I called him alone*, and Ezekiel xxxiii. 24, where Abraham is spoken of as one in opposition to the many of the people. In both these passages there is an express mention of Abraham, which is not the case here. They consequently understand, *Yet had he the residue of the Spirit* as meaning, that he remained a good man.

Still another interpretation is adopted by a considerable number of commentators, that there is no *question* but a simple affirmation: לֹא אֶחָד is to be translated *no one*, that the object of *made* is to be supplied from the previous sentence, that by the residue of the spirit is meant, *any portion of reason, any sense of right and wrong. The one* of the second clause they refer to *Abraham*. The whole verse would then be translated, "*No one*, who has a sense of right and wrong, has done what you are doing. And what did the one do?" They suppose that the guilty parties were wont to appeal to the case of Abraham to justify their conduct, and that the answer shows that his case was no precedent. There are very serious objections to this view. We have to supply the object of עָשָׂה, made, and the predicate of הָאֶחָד in the second clause. The position of וְלֹא, and the question in the second clause, render it probable that it is a question. Had the Prophet meant to say, that no one ever did so, he would have used אֵין אִישׁ, as Gen. xxxix. 11, or simply אַיִן.

Further, to understand the *residue of the spirit* of any reason, or moral sense, is strained, and lastly, אֶחָד refers to two different subjects, according to this view, first, to "*no one*," and, secondly, to Abraham, though the article is used, referring it back to the former.

There is an interpretation adopted by Fairbairn and Moore, which refers the *one* to the one *chosen seed*, the holy nation, but this strikes us as by no means so consistent and forcible as the one which refers it to the one flesh.

Ver. 15. **Therefore take heed.** Then follows a warning against the sin rebuked. The perfect with vav must be translated as imperative, as is often the case. To take heed to your spirit is to take heed to yourself (Deut. iv. 15; Joshua xxiii. 11).

Let no one deal treacherously. The third person is here used for the second in the previous clause. This is often the case where there is no change of subject. There is no advantage in following the LXX. and retaining the second person.

Ver 16. **For I hate divorce.** The Prophet here gives the reason of the warning. Jehovah says, "*I hate divorce.*" The LXX., Vulgate, and Luther, construe this very differently as a permission of divorce; *If thou hate her put her away.* But this is inconsistent with the context, which condemns divorce; it is in opposition to the law which permits divorce only for some great misconduct, "some *unclean thing*," and which (Deut. xxi. 15) requires the husband to maintain a hated wife. In favor of the translation, adopted by Köhler, Keil, Henderson, *I hate divorce*, may be urged, that the form may be considered as a participle, that the first person is often understood before participles, that, **saith Jehovah, God of Israel,** which *follows in the Hebrew*, implies that Jehovah is speaking directly in his own person.

Ver. 16. **And him who covers with violence his garment.** The design of this clause, parallel to and coördinate with, *I hate divorce*, is to express more emphatically the consequences and enormity of the sin, that it is exceedingly heinous, and the height of cruelty. We read in Ps. cix. 18, 29, of being *clothed with cursing as with a garment*, of *being clothed with shame*. We find the same construction of כִּסָּה with עַל in Num. xvi. 33; Ps. cvi. 15; Hab. ii. 14, where the object covered is preceded by עַל as here. "The earth covered them," "And covered the company of Abiram," "As the waters cover the sea." We therefore understand the relative, which is frequently omitted, and regard this clause as the continuation of the preceding, "*I hate divorce*," only with a more emphatic statement. Most of the recent commentators understand by his garment, his *wife*. This, says Köhler, is a very uncertain and rare Arabic idiom, and contrary to all Hebrew usage. Nor is it at all necessary, as the interpretation we have given does not introduce a different idea, and is confirmed by the following, "saith the Lord of Hosts."

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL.

The frequency of *divorce* in the United States, so that in one of the States divorce is allowed for "misconduct," reveals the same state of things existing now, as was here condemned by Jehovah, and must bring with it the same evils, and the same punishment. What tongue can adequately tell, what heart conceive, the untold misery from this cause, especially to the deserted wives, and the children left without a mother's care! How little is the indissoluble nature of the marriage relation regarded! and the fact, that the Lord was the witness of it, and will be a swift witness against those who violate it! The Saviour only allows of one cause of divorce, and regards divorce for any other as adultery.

MATTHEW HENRY: "The poor wives were ready to break their hearts, and not daring to make their case known to any other, they complained to God, and covered the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying. This is illustrated by the case of Hannah, who, upon the account of her husband's having another wife (though otherwise a kind husband) and the discontent thence arising, *fretted and wept*, was in *bitterness of soul*, and *would not eat*. It is a reason given why husbands and wives should live in holy love, that their prayers be not hindered. *The Lord has been witness* to the marriage covenant between thee and her, for to Him you appealed concerning your sincerity in it and fidelity to it; He has been a witness to all the *violations* of it, and is ready to judge between thee and her. It is highly aggravated by the consideration of the *persons* wronged and abused. *First*, she is *thy* wife, thy own, bone

of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh; the nearest to thee of all the relations thou hast in the world, and to cleave to whom thou must quit the rest. *Secondly.* She is the wife *of thy youth,* who had thy affections when they were at the strongest, was thy first choice, and with whom thou hast lived long. *Let not the darling of thy youth be the scorn and loathing of thy age. Thirdly.* She is thy *companion;* she has long been an equal sharer with thee in thy cares and griefs and joys. *Fourthly,* she is the wife of thy covenant, to whom thou art so firmly bound, that, while she continues faithful, thou canst not be loosed from her, for it was a covenant for life. Married people should often call to mind their marriage vows, and review them with all seriousness, as those that make conscience of performing what they promised.

MOORE: The phrases, "wife of thy youth," and "companion" are thrown in to show the aggravated nature of this offense. "She whom you thus wronged was the companion of those earlier and brighter days, when in the bloom of her young beauty she left her father's house, and shared your early struggles, and rejoiced in your later success; who walked arm-in-arm with you along the pilgrimage of life, cheering you in its trials by her gentle ministry; and now, when the bloom of her youth is faded, and the friends of her youth have gone, when father and mother whom she left for you are in the grave, then you cruelly cast her off as a worn-out, worthless thing, and insult her holiest affections by putting another in her place." There is something very touching in these allusions to the aggravations of this wrong, arising from the tender associations and memories of youth.

PRESSEL, on ver. 10: *Have we not all one Father?* No faith without love, and no love without faith. He who keeps the Father and Creator of all men before his eyes must love all men as his brethren, and he who recognizes in other men his brethren must in the Creator of all men love the Father. The prophet's mode of reasoning is not unlike that of the Apostle John in his First Epistle, iii. 17; iv. 11, 20, 21. The reference of the prophet to the Heavenly Father is a glimpse in the Old Testament of a doctrine which was not fully brought to light till the time of the New Testament.

On ver. 14. *Jehovah is witness between thee and the wife of thy youth.* This might be made use of as a solemn warning by a minister against divorce, whether intended or accomplished, as it represents to us the sanctity of marriage, and at the same time awakens in the hearts of the married all lovely and sweet recollections.

On ver. 15. He who regards the divine Spirit within us will be proof against the lusts of the flesh. He who indulges these lusts drives away from his heart more and more the residue of the divine Spirit.

SECTION IV.

The sending of Jehovah's Messenger. The coming of the Angel of the Covenant to judge, but not to utterly destroy Israel (Ch. ii. 17–iii. 7).

17 Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, wherein have we wearied *Him?* When ye say, Every one that doeth evil *is* good in the sight of the Lord, and He delighteth in them; or, Where *is* the God of judgment?

CHAPTER III.

1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and
the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly[1] [unexpectedly] come to his temple, even
the messenger [angel, ἀγγελός, LXX.] of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold,
2 he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He *is* like a refiner's fire, and
3 like fuller's soap [lye]; And He shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver: and
He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they
4 may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of
Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old, and as in
5 former years. And I will come near to you to judgment: and I will be a swift[2]
witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers,
and against those that oppress[3] the hireling in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside [Plural. The *Keri* reads *singular*] the stranger *from his right,* and
6 fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts. For I *am* the Lord,[4] I change not [For I,
Jehovah, change not]; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — פִּתְאֹם, not immediately (*statim* Jerome). but unawares, unexpectedly, LXX. suddenly. Messenger, corresponding to angel in Greek, Angel of the Covenant, identical with the Lord, הָאָדוֹן. This form is always spoken of Jehovah; Ex. xxiii. 17; Ps. cxiv. 7; Is. i. 24.

2 Ver. 5. — מְמַהֵר, swift, corresponding to פִּתְאֹם, verse 1, unexpectedly.

3 Ver. 5. — עָשַׁק, followed by a neuter object only here, and in Micah ii. 2.

4 Ver. 6. — Jehovah is not the predicate, but in apposition with I: the parallel, ye sons of Jacob, shows this.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 17. **Ye have wearied the Lord with your words.** This verse should have been the first verse of the third chapter, for a new subject begins here, having no very close connection with what precedes. The prophet is here opposing the unbelief of a class, who, like the Pharisees, served God, kept his ordinance, and walked mournfully before Him, but who lost their faith in Providence, when God delayed to punish the wicked, and who complained, not in words perhaps, for, as Cocceius remarks, "Scripture is wont to ascribe to the wicked expressions suitable to their character," — that He treated all alike, for if this was not the case, why did He not punish the wicked? That by the "doers of evil" here, and by the sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, and oppressors of ch. iii. 5, and by the *proud* (ch. iii. 15), are meant sinners of the *Jews*, and not of the *Gentiles*, seems perfectly evident, for these were offenses against the law of Moses. The prophecy had nothing to do with the heathen, who were without the pale of the Covenant. Such a denunciation of God's judgment upon the heathen would have gratified the haughty and intolerant spirit of the Jews. Strange to say, this reference has been made by Jerome, Hengstenberg, Hitzig, Reinke, Bunsen, Keil. The burden of the third chapter is, Maranatha! The Lord cometh!

Ch. iii. 1. **Behold, I will send my Messenger.** The prophet now opposes to the unbelief of the people Jehovah's own word. He will come for judgment, but before his coming, He will send his messenger to prepare his way. It is not said, *a* Messenger, but *his* Messenger, the one familiar to them from Isaiah's prophecy (ch. xl. 3), where the Hebrew words, *to prepare the way*, are identical with those here. The crier of Isaiah is here described as the Messenger of Jehovah. In both prophecies his office is the same. That Malachi is not here speaking of himself, nor of an ideal person, in whom the whole prophetic order culminated, as Hengstenberg maintains, is clear from the fact that this messenger is called in ch. iv. 5 Elijah, the prophet; that our Lord, speaking of John the Baptist, declares, "This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee" (Matt. xi. 10; Luke vii. 27), and that Mark makes use of this prophecy as fulfilled in John, quoting it, indeed, as from Isaiah, because he was the Major Prophet, according to Tregelles' text of Mark i. 2: "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord, their God, and he shall go before *him* (*i. e.*, the Lord, their God, the Angel of the Covenant, the Lord of Malachi iii. 1) in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke i. 16).

Chap. iii. 1. **The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Angel of the Covenant.** *The Lord, whom ye seek*, refers back to the preceding verse, where is the God of Judgment? The word Lord, אָדוֹן, with the article, is applied only to God. In the parallel clause, *even the angel of the covenant*, he is designated by a peculiar title expressing his office, as this is the only place where this official title occurs, it requires explanation.

From a very early period we find mention of an extraordinary Messenger, or Angel, who is sometimes called the *Angel of God*, at others, the *Angel of Jehovah*. He is represented as the Mediator between the invisible God and men in all God's communications and dealings with men. To this Angel divine names, attributes, purposes, and acts are ascribed. He occasionally assumed a human form, as in his interviews with Hagar, Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, Gideon, Manoah, and his wife. He went before the camp of Israel on the night of the Exodus. In Exodus xxiii. 20, Jehovah said, "Behold, I send an angel before thee to bring thee into the place, which I have prepared. My name is in him." In Isaiah lxiii. 9 he is called *the Angel of his Presence*, or *face*, where there is a reference to Ex. xxxiii. 14, 15, where Jehovah said to Moses, "My presence (or Hebrew, *My face*) shall go with thee, and Moses said, If thy face go not with us, carry us not up hence." He is called the *face of God*, because though no man can see his face and live, yet the Angel of his face is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. In him Jehovah's presence is manifested, and his glory reflected, for the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ. There is thus a gradual development in the Old Testament of the doctrine of the incarnation, of the distinction of persons in the Godhead, not brought to light fully, lest it should interfere with the doctrine of the unity of God. (For a more full discussion of the Angel of Jehovah, see Hengstenberg's *Christology*, vol. i. p. 161, Keith's Translation; Lange *On Genesis*, p. 386; Keil *On Genesis*, p. 184).

We would further remark that *of the Covenant* has been understood by most Commentators, as referring to the New Covenant of which Jesus is the Mediator (Heb. ix. 15). Köhler and Keil understand by it the Old Covenant, in which God promised to dwell with his people. In that case, the Angel is the Mediator of the Old Covenant. But we need not restrict it to either, but consider it applicable to both, to all God's covenant relations to man. *Behold he shall come* must be predicated of the covenant angel.

Ver. 2. **But who may abide the day of his coming.** We find similar language in Joel ii. 11: "*The day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?*" The question, who shall abide it, is an emphatic negative, no one can abide it. As the Lord is a righteous judge, the day in which He comes must be a day of decisive judg-

ment. As Augustine says, "The first and second advent of Christ are here brought together." Malachi sees the great white throne in the background. In the last clause of this verse he gives the reason why it is impossible to endure it, since He is like the fire of the refiner, which separates all dross, and like the lye of the washer, which cleanses all stains.

The word בֹּרִית, which is translated in our version *soap*, occurs only here and in Jeremiah ii. 22. Soap was unknown to the ancients, and this was a vegetable substance, from the saltwort, which was burned and water poured on its ashes.

Ver. 3. **And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.** In the second verse the Lord is the fire; here by a slight change in the figure, he is the smelter, who lets the pure metal flow off, while the dross remains behind. *He shall sit* is pictorial to make the figure more striking.

This judgment begins at the house of God, with the priests who stand in the closest relation to Him. This purification will result in the cutting off the impenitent, and in the reformation of those who repent, so that they offer sacrifices in a proper state of heart, in righteousness.

Ver. 4. **Then shall the offering, etc.** When the priests are thus purified, then the sacrifice of the whole nation will be acceptable, as in the early and better times, as in the days of David, to the Lord. The Masora remarks, that the prophetic lesson for the Sabbath before the Passover begins here and ends with the prophecy. This lesson was selected because of the injunction in ch. iii. 4, to remember the law of Moses.

Ver. 5. **And I will come near to you to judgment.** The prophet proceeds to show that the coming judgment will not be only upon the priests but upon all the people. He will practically convince the wicked by his judgment, and that too unexpectedly, and thus will be a swift witness. The sins specified here were all sins against the law of Moses, some of them to be capitally punished. The Jews were very much addicted from this time onward, as Josephus and the New Testament testify, to sorcery, or witchcraft. The *oppressors* are mentioned. Those who *oppress* the wages of the hireling. This verb is followed by the accusative of the person, excepting here, and in Micah ii. 2. *That turn aside the stranger* (Deut. xxvii. 19), or oppress him. The tenderest love to the stranger is everywhere breathed in the law (Ex. xxiii. 9; Deut. x. 17, 18; Deut. xxvii. 19).

Ver. 6. **For I Jehovah change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.** Jehovah is not here the predicate, as in our version and Luther's, but is in apposition with the pronoun *I*, in contrast with the sons of Jacob. *For* is causal. It is because Jehovah is unchangeable in his gifts and calling, that He will not suffer Israel wholly to perish, though their sins deserved their destruction. He must accomplish his purposes of mercy. Köhler finds in the phrase *sons of Jacob*, an intimation that they resembled Jacob in character before he became Israel, but it is better to regard it as an emphatic expression for the covenant nation. These do not perish, because their existence rests upon the promise of the unchangeable God, as Moore remarks, "The sons of Jacob shall not be consumed, the seed of Christ shall not perish. The unchangeableness of God is the sheet-anchor of the Church."

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

E. Pocock: On chap. iii. 1. He should come *unawares* when men should not think on or be aware of Him. By the temple no doubt is meant the temple at Jerusalem, then lately built after their return from the Babylonish captivity, which, whatever alterations were made in it, was still looked upon as one till the time it was destroyed by the Romans; and by the Jews called the *Second Temple* in respect to that former, built by Solomon, and destroyed by the Chaldæans. To this temple it is here said, that the Lord here spoken of should come; and so did Christ whom we say to be that Lord; and of his coming to it and his appearances there at several times we read, *He was there first presented by his mother* (Luke ii. 22); there again, when He was twelve years old, found sitting among the doctors (ver. 46), where, in his answer to his mother who told him that they had sought Him sorrowing, He may seem to allude even to this prophecy, "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" Was it not foretold that He should come to the temple? Was not that the proper place for Him to be in, and for them to look after Him in? Several other times we read of his going to it, preaching in it, received with Hosannahs, exercising his authority in it, in purging it, and vindicating the dignity of it, and driving out thence those that profaned it. Any of these appearances there is sufficient to prove in and by Him to have been made good that which we take to be the main drift of this expression in this prophecy, namely, that the Lord (Christ or Messiah) here spoken of was to come while the temple (that temple then built) was standing; which is likewise evidently foretold by the Prophet Haggai (ch. ii. 7), that *into it should come the desire of all nations*, and it should be filled with glory, yea, that thereby *the glory of that latter house should be greater than that of the former* (ver. 9), though it were *then in their eyes as nothing in comparison with it* (ver. 3).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Pressel, on ver. 17. *Where is the God of judgment?* The judgment of the world and of Scripture as to the riddle of human destiny; or, *there is* a God, who lives to avenge and punish,—a truth which even men of the world admit, but which only lovers of the truth rightly understand. *Ye have wearied*, etc. Whereby is the God of infinite patience wearied? Not by our prayers. Not even by our infirmities, but indeed by our hardness and stubbornness, which will not confess our guilt, and be converted.

On ch. iii. 1. Though there are quotations from the Old Testament in the New, which are to be regarded only as an application, though never a random one, of the language of the Old, yet, in all the quotations, which are accompanied by an explanation from the Lord Himself, or his Apostles, we have the most certain commentary, which informs us how the Old Testament writer himself understood, and how he would have others understand his prophecy. On this ground, such an interpretation of Mal. iii. 1, as Hengstenberg and others have given, is untenable; for when the Lord Himself (Matt. xi. 10; Luke vii. 27) says, "This is he of whom it is written," we must understand by, "my messenger," a definite person, first named by Mal-

achi, and not the collective body of the prophets, extending down to John the Baptist. If there is to be a second coming of our Lord, it may be assumed that the prophecy before us will be fulfilled in all its particulars, and for the very reason that Malachi knows no difference between a first and second coming of the Lord, and his Messiah. Now it cannot but be expected, that the second coming of the Lord will be accompanied with the same purification as the first was in the children of Israel, and that the process of this purification will have the same general cause and result. Though this is to be expected, it by no means follows that this will be accomplished by a second sending of John the Baptist, or by the sending of only one man, after the manner of Elijah, since the person of the Lord Himself is carefully to be distinguished from that of his forerunner: the Lord is one; the forerunner, whether John or Elijah, may be more than one: the Lord is for all nations; Elijah and John only for the people of Israel; and when the second coming of the Lord is at hand, there may be also among the different nations of the world, different messengers, like Elijah and John, to prepare the way of the Lord, as indeed the Revelation of John speaks, in the eleventh chapter, of two such witnesses.

On ver. 5. We need only further remark, that between the first and second coming of our Lord, a process of purification takes place in portions of Christendom, by virtue of which the impure elements will be cast off, the hollowness and profanation of God's service and the Christian character will be exposed, and the true Christian will go to meet his future glory, as after all his inevitable, and often fiery trials, he reflects the image of his God and Saviour.

Among the commentators on the Prophets, we must reckon the great Handel, for he has in such a way illustrated to the world their most weighty prophecies in his Oratorio of the Messiah, that we cannot read them without being reminded of his musical commentary, and thereby be inspired, as it were, to interpret them. This is specially true of this last prophecy of the Old Testament.

On chap. iii. 1: *Behold, the day cometh!* Two Advent questions: Dost thou believe in the coming of the Lord in humiliation? and dost thou hope for his coming in glory? The world may believe or not, the Lord cometh: the world may prepare itself, or not, the Lord judges. This first Advent teaches us the former, and his second Advent the latter. After perhaps the hymn has been sung, "All Christians wait for thee, O Son of God!" can we also say, "And love thy appearing"

The Lord once said, "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed," and it remains true down to the second coming. Notwithstanding God calls to his people, Behold! for true faith has its eyes open for that which happened at the first coming of the Lord, for that which will happen at his second, and for that which must happen in us, in order that the first as well as the second coming may prove our salvation. *He shall prepare the way before me.* Every minister of the Church, and every Christian, in the most private circle, can prepare the way of the Lord by warning and teaching, by example and intercession, but he is only a servant, and must wait in the humility and patience of the Lord Himself. Everything in the world is easier to be calculated, than the day when the Lord comes, and easier to be endured than his coming. *He shall sit as a refiner's fire.* The refining of the Lord has its day, and the day of the Lord has its refining. What salutary terror, and what strong consolation must this comparison of the divine refiner work in us!

The purifying fire is at hand to us all. It brings with it a torture, for which the world has no soothing balm; it penetrates what is most secret and inmost; it makes manifest whether we shall be acknowledged by the Lord, or cast away. If we would be the Lord's, then we may say, The Lord sits, and has his eyes fixed upon me even in the furnace, and especially there. He intends only my purification, and should the smallest grain of gold in faith and love be found in me, He does not cast me away with the dross of this world; and his design is that his image may be reflected in me, and that I may be acceptable to Him. The prayer of humility and faith is, O Lord, though thou shouldst find no gold in me, let me only be found as useful silver.

Ver. 5. How suddenly and how deeply will the day of judgment interrupt the pursuits of the world! How suddenly! for the prophet says, "suddenly," and "a swift witness," so that the world will be surprised in the midst of its pursuits. How deeply! for all unrighteous actions and causes, however great, or little, will be rejudged, and brought to light in their ungodliness. Job was able to comfort himself with the word, "My witness is in heaven!" — the opposite of the threatening word, "a swift witness:" hence the question comes up, Have I a witness in heaven to fear? What does He see with his all-seeing eye? and what sentence will He hereafter pass upon me with his all-decisive lips?

SECTION V.

The People are rebuked for withholding the legal Tithes and Offerings.

Chapter III. 7–12.

7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances
and have not kept *them*. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the
8 Lord of Hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob[1] [defraud]
God? Yet [*that*, Köhler, Keil, Pressel], ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein
have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.[2] [In tithe and heave offering.]

9 Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for [yet] ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation.
10 Bring ye all the tithes[3] [tithe] into the storehouse[4] [treasury], that there may be
meat [food, Vulgate *cibus*] in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord
of Hosts, if I will not[5] open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a
blessing that *there shall* not *be room* enough *to receive it*[6] [to superabundance].
11 And I will rebuke[7] the devourer for your sakes,[8] and he shall not destroy the
fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit[10] before the time in
12 the field, saith the Lord of Hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye
shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of Hosts.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 8. — קָבַע, found only in Prov. xxii. 3: to cheat, defraud. The Fut. is used here in the sense of: dare a man rob God.

2 Ver. 8. — תְּרוּמָה. The heave-offering.

3 Ver. 10. — The whole tithe.

4 Ver. 10. — אוֹצָר, storehouse, or treasury; Neh. xiii. 12.

5 Ver. 10. — אִם־לֹא, not an oath, *whether not*.

6 Ver. 10. — דַּי means need, lack.

7 Ver. 10. — בְּלִי negatives the idea — beyond sufficiency.

8 Ver. 11. — גָּעַר, to rebuke. In ch. ii. 3, it is translated, corrupt. לָכֶם, dative of use, profit.

9 Ver. 11. — The LXX. read, אַשְׁחִית, I will destroy.

10 Ver. 11. — תְשַׁכֵּל, miscarry, applied to the vine.

11 Ver. 11. — יַשְׁחִת. The future is here used contingently, to denote a probable future occurrence. See Nordheimer, 993, 1.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 7. **Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts.** After Jehovah had announced the coming judgment for the long-continued transgressions of the people, He adds a gracious promise, as in Zech i. 3: "Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord, and I will return unto you." In self-righteous delusion, supposing that they lack nothing, and need no repentance, they inquire, *Wherein*, in what particular, shall we return? The prophet thereupon shows them their sin. They do what no man should attempt. They try to defraud God in the tithe and heave-offering, either by not paying them at all, or not paying them as they should. The word קָבַע, which occurs besides only in Proverbs xxii. 3, where it is translated, *spoil*, means here, as the connection shows, *defraud*, *overreach*, *cheat*.

Ver. 8. **Will a man rob** (or defraud) **God?** The Prophet appeals to their conscience for a decision as to the baseness of their conduct. **But ye have robbed**, or defrauded, **me**, or, **That ye have robbed me.** This is a reason of the previous question, *since* you have defrauded me.

In tithe and offering. This is a specification of the manner in which they had robbed God. In Neh. xiii. 10 we find a striking coincidence with this verse. "I perceived, that the portions of the Levites had not been given them. Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, wine, and oil."

The tithe, according to Lev. xxvii. 30, and Deut. xiv. 22, was of the corn, wine, and oil, and of the firstlings of the flock and herd, for the maintenance of the Levites. The heave-offering — for that is here referred to — was the portion of the priests. "Ye shall give the heave-offering to the priests." It was partly a free-will offering, and partly prescribed by the law. They withheld tithes, notwithstanding that God had already visited them with severe punishment, which aggravated their guilt. They had been cursed, as we learn from the following verses, with failure of the harvest and famine. This curse corresponded to their sin. As they had refused to give God his due by withholding the tithes and offerings, so had He withheld from them the products of the field.

Ver. 9. **Ye are cursed with a curse.** The position of the noun before the verb is here highly emphatic. **Yet me ye defraud.** It is not necessary to regard the ו as causal.

Ver. 10. **Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse.** The prophet now enlarges upon the mode of recovering the divine favor. Israel should not, as before, keep back a part of the tithes, but should pay the whole without defrauding Jehovah, that there might be food for the priests and Levites. Notwithstanding Jehovah was angry with the priests, yet He cannot suffer the people to withhold the tithe.

Storehouse. This same word is translated, Neh. xiii. 12, *treasuries*. We find in 2 Chronicles xxxi. 11, mention of chambers in the Temple, into which they were to bring the tithes. In Neh. x. 38, the Levites were to bring the tithe to the chambers, into the treasure-house.

Prove me now herewith. The object of the proof of Jehovah was not, whether He would be faithful to his promise, for this was not the subject under discussion, but whether He was a holy and righteous God, for this had been called in question by them. They were now to put Him to the test, and learn by the result of the experiment, in what relation He stood to them, and also learn, that as He had manifested Himself as a holy God in his severity, so He would also do so in his goodness, and the abundance of the blessings conferred upon those who keep his commandments.

If I will not open the windows of heaven.

This is to be regarded as an indirect question, *whether* I will not. *Open the windows.* We read of the windows of heaven in Gen. vii. 11, 2 Kings vii. 2. The copious blessing is here compared to rain coming down from heaven.

And pour out upon you a blessing till there is not sufficiency of room. The word דַּי means, *sufficiency*, and *room* is to be understood, as in Zech. x. 10: "and *place* shall not be found for them," where *place* is to be supplied, as here *room.* בְּלִי negatives the idea of the noun as in Is. v. 14. The interpretation, *forever*, adopted by Wordsworth: "Till there be not enough, till my abundance is exhausted; and since this can never be, therefore it means, forever," is strained and unnatural. The Septuagint has translated it: "Until there should be enough."

Ver. 11. **And I will rebuke the devourer.** This verse describes in detail what blessings Jehovah's coming will bring with it. Jehovah will take away everything which would injure the fruits. The devourer, that is, the locust, shall no more ravage the land. The corn and wine shall flourish. The grapes shall not fall before they ripen.

Ver. 12. **And all nations shall call you blessed.** The consequence of Jehovah's blessing will be, that the land will be an object of pleasure to every one. We find similar language in Zech. viii. 13: "As ye were a curse among the heathen, so shall ye be a blessing."

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL.

From MATT. HENRY: On *Return unto me* (ver. 7). What a gracious invitation God gives them to return and repent! *Return unto me*, and to your duty, return to your service, return to your allegiance, return as a traveller that has missed his way, as a soldier that has run from his colors, as a treacherous wife that has gone away from her husband; return, thou backsliding Israel, return to me; and then I will return unto you, and be reconciled, will remove the judgments you are under and prevent those you fear. What a peevish answer they return to this gracious invitation! *Wherein shall we return.* Note: God takes notice what returns our hearts make to the calls of his Word, what we say, and what we think when we have heard a sermon; what answer we give to the message sent us. When God calls us to *return* we should answer, as they did (Jer. iii. 22): Behold, we come, but not as these here, Wherein shall we return? They take it as an affront to be told of their faults, and called upon to amend them; they are ready to say, What ado do these prophets make about *returning* and *repenting.* They are so ignorant of themselves, and of the strictness, extent, and spiritual nature of the divine law, that they see nothing in themselves to be *repented* of; they are pure in their own eyes, and think they need no repentance. Many ruin their souls by baffling the calls to repentance.

HOMILETICAL.

PRESSEL: On ver. 10. *Prove me now herewith.* The condescending goodness of God gives not only to the godly, but sometimes even to the ungodly, opportunity and even a challenge to prove his truth and almightiness; and it is the duty of a minister of God now, as it was then of the Prophet Malachi, not only to point both classes to it, but even to offer to them this proving of God, confident as Elijah was against Ahab, and as Isaiah was against Ahaz, that God will not forsake his servants, but will by the event put to shame all unbelief.

On ver. 13. We are very apt to complain of God's providences, when extraordinary afflictions and troubles put men out of patience, or when we read or hear of extraordinary accidents, but where a heart stands firm in the fear and love of God, what the Apostle John says: "His seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin," is true of it.

On vers. 10–12. How much depends upon our giving ourselves wholly as an offering to the Lord! The offerings which the Lord now requires are our own hearts, and all that comes from them. But if the Lord was so strict in tithes, how much more so is He with our hearts! Dost thou wish the full blessing of God, then be exact in whatever is thy duty. What is our duty? Whatever God requires of us, whether great or little, whether his service or an every-day life. How can he who is not strict in his duty hope, or even pray for the full blessing of God?

On vers. 14, 15. The vain service of God, He serves God in vain who serves Him only outwardly. He who serves Him from the heart has never served Him in vain. God is not man. It sometimes is the case with men that an outward service only receives an unmerited reward, or that he who serves another from the heart does not receive his due reward, for men can be deceived; but this can never be the case with God, for He is omniscient and faithful. All things are under God's providence. The contrary seems to be the case in the history of the world and in daily experience, and men without conscience lose thereby their faith; but this is only so in appearance, for the inward testimony of the heart and eternity will make plain the most difficult and frowning providences, and sometimes in this world, God's holy and righteous government is clearly manifested.

SECTION VI.

The Coming of a Day of Judgment which will vindicate the Ways of God, and reward the Righteous and punish the Wicked. Elijah the Prophet.

CHAPTERS III. 13–IV. 6.

13 Your words have been stout [bold] against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say,
14 What have we spoken *so much* against thee? Ye have said, It *is* vain to serve

God: and what profit *is it* that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have
walked mournfully [gloomily] before [because of Jehovah] the Lord of Hosts?
15 And now[1] we call the proud happy; yea they that work wickedness are set up;
16 yea,[2] *they that* tempt God are even delivered. Then they that feared the Lord
spake often[3] [nothing corresponding to *often* in Hebrew] one to another; and the Lord heark-
ened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance[4] was written before him for them
17 that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine,
saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels[5] [*or* possession];
18 and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then
shall ye return[6] [again], and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between
him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

Chapter IV. 1–6.

1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea,
and all [plural in LXX., Targum, and eighty MSS.] that do wickedly shall be stubble: and
the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave
2 them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun
[fem. as in Gen. xv. 17; Jer. xv. 9; Nah. iii. 17] of righteousness arise with healing in his
wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up[7] [leap for joy] as calves of the stall.
3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of
4 your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the Lord of Hosts. Remember ye
the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Is-
5 rael, *with* [strike out: *with*] the [as] statutes and judgments [precepts]. Behold,
I will send you Elijah the prophet[8] before the coming of the great and dreadful day
6 of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to [עַל, to *or* together
with] the children [sons], and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I
come and smite the earth with a curse.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 15. — עַתָּה, a particle of inference, chaps. i. 9, ii. 1. (Ewald, 353.)

2 Ver. 15. — The second גַּם marks a climax. Nordh. 1096.

3 Ver. 16. — Spake often. The same word is used in ver. 13, and translated, spoken. The word *often* is not in the Hebrew.

4 Ver. 16. — Remembrance (זִכָּרוֹן), found in Ex. xxviii. 29; Num. x. 10.

5 Ver. 17. — סְגֻלָּה, jewels (Ex. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6; xxvi. 18).

6 Ver. 18. — Return, שׁוּב, is used here as in i. 4, as an adverb, again (Gen. xiv. 2).

7 Chap. iv. 2. — Grow up. פִּשְׁתֶּם, frisk. LXX.: σκιρτᾶν (Hab. i. 8).

8 Ver. 5. — LXX.: Ἠλίαν τὸν Θεσβίτην. The Masora directs that this verse should be repeated after the last verse, so that the book may not end with a curse.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 13. **Your words have been bold against me.** Jehovah through the Prophet, now shows the people that their murmuring against Him and his service as unprofitable is unjust. Hengstenberg and Reinke suppose that there is a dialogue between the Prophet and the people, that they reply to the Prophet's words, and contradict them. Jehovah has said, *Prove* me now herewith? They reply, The wicked prove God, and are delivered. The Prophet says: They shall call you happy. They answer: And now we call the wicked happy. The Prophet says: Ye have not observed mine ordinances. The people reply: We HAVE observed them. But as this view is too ingenious, and the Niphal is used, They spake *one to another*, they *conversed* about God, and as it is analogous to ii. 17, Ye have wearied me with your words, we must reject it.

Your words are stout, that is, bold, *presumptuous, impudent.* We have the substance of them, that it was profitless to serve God, since He was not a righteous God, and that therefore they are to be called happy who sought to secure their earthly well-being, without regard to God. Such hard speeches of ungodly sinners against God never pass the lips of a pious Asaph or Job, not even in the times of sorest trial, and in hours of the deepest darkness. They, though uttering despairing feeling, never draw such conclusions, nor go so far as to renounce God. Some have found the atheism of these sinners in the phrase serve *God*, instead of serve *Jehovah*.

Ver. 14. **We have kept his ordinance.** We have observed all the prescribed rites. **Walked mournfully,** to go about in sackcloth, to neglect their appearance in token of fasting, and for the sake of Jehovah. They lay stress upon fasting, whether prescribed or voluntary, which was regarded as more meritorious. They attributed worth to the opus operatum of fasting, a disposition attacked by Isaiah in chap. lviii., which increased after the Captivity, until it culminated in the fasting twice in the week of the Pharisees.

They felt that they had claims upon God, and complained that He did not reward them for it.

Ver. 15. **And now we call the proud happy.** In consequence of the supposed uselessness of their piety, and the adversity in which Jehovah suffered them to remain, they, unlike Asaph, offend against the generation of God's children by speaking thus, and begin to call the haughty sinners happy, as those who have chosen the best part. We must again regard the *proud* here as in chap. ii. 17, as godless sinners in *Israel*. They must be the same with the proud in chap. iv. 1, which Hengstenberg admits refers to sinners in Zion, though here he refers it to the heathen. The heathen are spoken of as the objects of the divine punishment, only when they have harmed God's people, and never where the sins of his people are rebuked. The people now give the reason why they considered the haughty sinners happy. They appeal to the matter of fact, that, though the wicked have put God to the test by their sins, calling down the vengeance of heaven, yet they have been unpunished, and their condition is therefore to be envied. The two clauses correspond to each other, and are placed in a reciprocal relation to each other by the double yea (גַּם).

Ver. 16. **Then they that feared the Lord spake one to another.** The prophet now in a narrative form gives the speeches of the godly in contrast with the hard speeches of the ungodly. There were a faithful few who feared God with a holy fear, and who valued his name, who, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, believed that verily THERE WAS a God judging the earth. The language of the ungodly was the occasion of their speaking *together*, not, *often*, as in our version. It was *then* (אָז) they testified their faith in God. We need not adopt the view of Maurer and Hitzig, that *vav. conv.* is to be translated *that*, and begins the quotation of their very words, for this is contrary to usage. We have not the substance of their conversation. Jerome imagines that it was a defense of God's dealings, which is doubtless correct. They sighed and cried for the abominations of the times (Ezekiel ix. 4). Horror took hold of them because of the wicked who forsook God's law, and they exhorted one another daily not to lose their faith in God, as holy and righteous. Their conduct and words pleased God, and to show the certainty of their reward He is represented as recording their names and good deeds in a book of remembrance, lest He should forget to reward them. Some have found an allusion to the custom of ancient kings keeping books, in which all the most important events of their reigns were recorded, as in Esther vi. 1, 2, but it rests upon a much older and Scriptural idea, that the names and actions of the righteous are written in a book before God (Ps. lvi. 9; Dan. vii. 10). The Pirke Avoth, a collection of the sayings of the Rabbis, quotes this passage, and the comment of Rabbi Chanina ben Teradjon: "Where two sit together, and there are no words of the law spoken between them, there is the seat of the scorner of whom it is said, 'He sitteth not in the seat of the scorner;' but where two sit together, and words of the law are spoken between them, there dwells the Shekinah among them, as it is written, 'Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.'"

Ver. 17. **And they shall be mine, etc.** find the additional promise, *They shall be to*

peculiar treasure, not *jewels*, specifically, as in our version. The accents make סְגֻלָּה (possession), the object of *make*, but most of the recent commentators, following the LXX., the Targum, and Jerome, regard it as the predicate of, *They shall be to me. They shall be my possession in the day which I make, or appoint.* In favor of this, we find the same words in Ex. xix. 5, to which this verse doubtless refers. "Ye shall be to me a *peculiar possession* out of all nations," and also in Deut. vii. 6: "The Lord, thy God, hath chosen thee to be to Him a people of *possession*." Further, in ch. iv. 3, we find the same phrase as here, *the day I make*, or appoint. In the New Testament, this language is borrowed from the LXX. to represent the relation of believers to God, as in 1 Pet. ii. 9; Eph. i. 14; 2 Thess. ii. 14; Titus ii. 14, where we find a *peculiar people*, where the same word, *περιποίησιν*, is used, as in the Septuagint translation of this passage.

I will spare them — manifest tender compassion to them, as a man spareth not his son merely, but his son, who serveth him, who is filial and obedient. "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" (Ps. ciii. 13).

Ver. 18. **Then shall ye again discern between.** The subject of the verb must be the wicked murmurers, and not, as Henderson thinks, the righteous. The wicked had arraigned God's justice, now they shall be forced to acknowledge it in their own punishment. The word שׁוּב in Hebrew is sometimes used as an adverb. It is so regarded here by Köhler, Keil, Gesenius, Henderson, and others. Hengstenberg and Keil find in ver. 18 a reference to Ex. xi. 7, where it is said: "The Lord put a *difference* between the Egyptians and Israel." Köhler understands by it, that the wicked would now stand in a different relation to the question than they did before, that they would, in the future, in consequence of Jehovah's judgments, recognize that difference. Calvin understands it, "if a different state of things." We are not to put too much emphasis upon it, nor need we refer it to any special case. The preposition *between*, seems to be used here as a noun, though not strictly such, in the sense of *difference*. The time will come, when ye will see *the between* in relation to the righteous and the wicked, as in Is. lxv. 13, 14: "Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry. My servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall howl for vexation of spirit."

Ch. iv. 1. **For, behold, the day cometh.** In Hebrew, there are but *three* chapters in Malachi, the third chapter containing twenty-four verses, instead of eighteen, as in our version. Most of the modern versions begin unnecessarily here a new chapter. The prophet now describes the results of that appointed day, first to the wicked (ver. 19), and then to the righteous, in vers. 20, 24.

Behold, the day cometh! We find similar language in Zeph. i. 15: "*That day is a day of wrath, Dies Iræ, Dies Illa*, and in Joel ii. 31, where we find "*the great and terrible day of the Lord*." Some have referred the day here spoken of to the destruction of Jerusalem, others to the last great day. While it is to receive its fulfillment in the last day, yet it is capable of more than one fulfillment. It is fulfilled in every coming to judgment. As Wordsworth says: "All God's judgments are hours, marked on the dial-plate, and struck by the alarum of that great day." The destruction of Jerusalem

was but the fiery and blood-red dawn of that day of days. To the ungodly it will be like a furnace, where the fire burns most fiercely, and which scorches and consumes everything which comes near it. They that do wickedly will then be as the dry chaff, which is utterly consumed. Isaiah uses the same figure; v. 21; and Obadiah, i. 18; Zech. xii. 6; Matt. iii. 12; Luke iii. 17.

That it shall leave, etc. The אֲשֶׁר here is not a relative pronoun, as Maurer and Reinke suppose, but a conjunction; so Keil, Köhler, and Ewald, *so that neither root nor branch*, a proverb, to express utter destruction; not one shall escape.

John the Baptist made this verse the text of his exhortations when he spoke of the axe laid to the root of the tree, and the chaff burnt with unquenchable fire.

Ver. 2. **But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise.** Jehovah now turns, and directly addresses the righteous, and promises them that the Sun of Righteousness will rise upon them. There has been much difference of opinion as to whether the Sun of Righteousness was to be understood *personally* of Christ, or whether it is only a genitive of apposition — the sun, which is righteousness, or, righteousness, as a sun. The Fathers, Eusebius, Cyril, Theodoret, the early Protestant commentators, and a majority of modern ones, refer it to Christ, while the Jewish commentators, and Hengstenberg, Keil, Reinke, Köhler, refer it to the consummation of salvation, in which Jehovah's righteousness reveals itself to the godly. Hengstenberg admits that the interpretation which refers it to Christ is well founded, though he does not find in it a distinct allusion to the person of Christ. Keil, while interpreting it, that righteousness, that is, salvation, is regarded as a sun, yet concedes that the personal view is founded upon a truth, that the coming of Christ brings righteousness. Henderson remarks: "There can be no doubt with respect to the application," and refers to the passage where Christ is called the light of men, the light of the world, a great light (Is. ix. 1), a light to the Gentiles (Is. xlix. 6), the true light, the day-spring from on high. Moore remarks: "We cannot think that the prophet here meant to predict Christ personally, or, indeed, to look at the ground of this righteousness at all." We think it safer, from the parallel passages, from exegetical tradition, and from the internal evidence, commending itself to every believing heart, and which has found expression in hymns, and in the recorded religious history of multitudes, to understand this sublime figure not of an abstract righteousness, but of a personal Christ.

Healing in its wings. The beams of this sun are compared to the outstretched wings of a bird, to which they bear some resemblance. The figure is not to be carried out so far as to refer to the swiftness of a bird, or to the protection of her young by the mother bird, but is to be confined simply to healing. . . Healing or salvation comes to the God-fearing through the wings, or beams of this sun, shining fully upon them. As when the sun returns to the earth in spring time, all nature rejoices in its light and warmth, so the righteous shall be awaked to a new life by the beams of this sun.

And ye shall go forth, and leap as calves. The righteous shall go forth from darkness, and their joy is compared, in a simple and childlike manner, to that of calves, let loose from the stall to go to pasture, who frisk and leap for joy.

Ver. 3. **They shall be ashes.** The wicked, who have troubled them, shall be as little regarded by them as the ashes trodden under foot of men.

Ver. 4. **Remember ye the law of Moses.** Now follows an exhortation as to the way in which the coming judgment is to be averted. We have here the conclusion of the whole book, and the appropriate sealing up of the Old Testament. There is in it an intimation, that no further communications are to be made. As they had gone away from God's law, now they must give all diligence to observe and obey it. The Septuagint, it is difficult to see for what reason, has transposed this verse, and placed it at the end of the book, where it is out of place, as it serves as the introduction to the promise of John the Baptist, and the reformation to be wrought by him. Hengstenberg and Reinke suppose the reason of the transposition is to be found in the great importance of the precept, but the more probable reason is, that it was done, as in other cases, to avoid too harsh a sound in the last verse.

Which I commanded him, not whom I commanded, as Ewald, Reinke, and Bunsen. Jehovah calls attention to the divine authority and origin of the law. Moses was but the servant of Jehovah.

Statutes and Judgments. These words are found in the same combination in Deut. iv. 8, and may be construed as an exegetical definition, belonging to *which*, or with Köhler, as the predicate, which are statutes and judgments.

Ver. 5. **Behold I will send Elijah the prophet.** We have here a repetition of the promise in ch. iii. 1 in a more specific form. Behold, I will send Elijah, not the Tishbite, as the Septuagint has it, but Elijah the prophet. But why is John the Baptist here called Elijah? The angel before his birth said unto his father, Zacharias, "And he shall go before Him in the *spirit* and *power* of Elijah." There were many points of resemblance between Elijah and John. Both prophesied in a time of great unbelief and apostasy from the law; both sought to bring back the people to the piety of their fathers; both prophesied before great and terrible judgments. The historical circumstances in which they lived were remarkably parallel. Ahab reappears in Herod, Jezebel in Herodias The words of Mark vi. 20, where he speaks of Herod, fearing John, and did many things, apply without any alteration to Ahab. Their very appearance, the fashion of their dress, and their mode of life, were identical. Bengel says of John: "Even the dress and food of John were in accordance with his teaching and office. The minister of repentance led the same life as penitents themselves should lead." His mode of life was a sermon *de facto* on mortification. We may thus clearly see why John should be called in prophecy, which, for the most part, suppresses names, and which throws a thin veil of obscurity over its subjects, *Elijah*, just as Jesus himself was called David, because he was the son and successor of David (Hosea iii. 5; Ez. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; Jer. xxx. 9). The interpretation of this prophecy, that Elijah was to reappear before the coming of the Messiah, has been universally held by the Jews, and the obstinacy with which they have clung to this opinion, received by tradition from their fathers, has been a great hindrance to their receiving Jesus as the Christ. In this interpretation, they have been countenanced by most of the

Fathers, as Chrysostom, Origen, Cyril, Theodoret, Theophylact, Jerome, Tertullian, Augustine, who held to two Elijahs of prophecy, the one, John the Baptist, and the other, Elijah in person, who was to reappear, to convert the Jews, and prepare the way for the second coming of the Lord. The Romish commentators, in consequence of this consent of the Fathers, have held it a heresy, or next to a heresy, to reject this interpretation. Some few modern Protestant commentators, as Hitzig, Maurer, Ewald, Olshausen, Alford, Stier, and Ryle, have adopted the same view. Alford says: "John the Baptist only *partially* fulfilled the great prophecy, which announced the *real Elias* (the words of Malachi will hardly bear any other than a personal meaning) who is to forerun the second and greater coming."

We have two most important declarations of our Lord's on the Elijah of Malachi. Speaking of John the Baptist, he said: "This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I will send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. And if ye will receive it, This is Elias, who was to come." Here our Lord declares that John fulfilled both prophecies in Malachi, and that he was his forerunner. And further, that so obstinate were their foregone conclusions, that He did not expect they would believe it.

In Matthew xvii. 10, "His disciples asked Him, saying, Why then say the Scribes, that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things, but I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Then understood his disciples, that He spake unto them of John the Baptist." We would remark, that this conversation was soon after the Transfiguration of our Lord, when Elijah appeared. Sharing the common Jewish opinion, and supposing his residence with our Saviour would be a permanent one, they were perplexed at his disappearance. Their question led our Lord to speak of the prophecy of Malachi, and to *place Himself at the time of its utterance*, when the coming of Elijah as John was yet *future*. Hence He uses the *future* in speaking of John's agency. Alford infers from the use of the future, that Elijah is yet to reappear, but it can be easily explained in the way which has been done.

Again, the denial of John (John i. 21) has been made use of by the few Protestant commentators who have held the view of another Elijah. John did not deny to the deputation from the Sanhedrim, that he was the Elijah of Malachi. This he affirms, when he says, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord;" but that he was Elijah *in their sense*, Alford finds in, *If ye will receive it*, a confirmation of his views, but this expression strengthens the exclusive reference to John the Baptist, that it was so plain, that nothing but the most inveterate prejudice prevented their acknowledging it.

Before the coming of the great and dreadful day. This expression, the *great and terrible* day, is found in Joel ii. 31. The day (ch. iii. 17, iv. 1–5) throughout has the same meaning. It refers especially to the destruction of Jerusalem. When the Lord Jesus came, it was not only to give eternal life to those who received Him, but for judgment upon those who rejected Him. His coming was necessarily followed by the condemnation of the unbelieving. The Gospel is always a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. But these words have more than one fulfillment. The last and perfect one will be in the last day.

Ver. 6. **And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children.** Some commentators, among whom are Ewald, Maurer, and Henderson, understand this of a restoration of family harmony, but it is better to understand it of a reconciliation between the ungodly, estranged from the piety of their ancestors, and their pious forefathers, produced by repentance. Thus the bond of union, which had been broken, will be restored. That such is the meaning is proved by Luke i. 16, 17, where "the disobedient to the wisdom, or disposition, of the just," is substituted, as containing the same sense.

Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. By the earth here is meant, the land of Israel. The word, חֵרֶם, *curse*, means anything devoted to the Lord, and is sometimes used in a good sense, as in Lev. xxvii. 28. More generally, however, in a *bad* sense, as in Zech. xiv. 11, where it is translated, *utter destruction*, the ban of extermination.

The close of the Old Testament in Malachi is unspeakably solemn. On its last leaf we find the blessing and the curse, life and death, set before us. As its first page tells us of the sin and curse of our first parents, so its last speaks of the law given by Moses, of sin, and the curse following, mingled with promises of the grace which was to come by Jesus Christ. So on the last page of the New Testament, we read of "plagues written in this book," but its last words are gracious words: "Surely I come quickly! Amen. Even so. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! Amen." [1]

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL.

WORDSWORTH: "The concluding sentence of Malachi is a solemn warning to these latter days. The Holy Spirit knows what is best for us. He warns us of future punishment, in order that we may escape it, and that we may inherit everlasting glory. Knowing the terror of the Lord, he would persuade men. And the character of these latter days, when the Evil One is endeavoring to lure men into his own grasp, and to make them his victims forever, by dissolving God's attributes into one universal fullness of undiscriminating love; and by endeavoring to persuade them that his justice and holiness are mere ideal theories and visionary phantoms, and that there is no judgment to come, and that the terrors of hell are but a dream, in defiance of the clear words of Him who is the Truth (Mark ix. 44; Matt. xxv. 46), shows that there is divine foresight in this warning by Malachi. Let it not be forgotten that the Apostle of love, St. John, ends his Epistle with a warning against idolatry, and that at the close of the Apocalypse, there is a solemn declaration against all who tamper with any words of that book, which

1 Aben Ezra, at the close of his *Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, says: "May God soon fulfill the prophecy of Elijah, and hasten his coming!" Rather may we pray that the veil may be taken from the hearts of the Jews, so that they may believe that this prophecy has been fulfilled, that Elias has already come, and that they may with us unite in the prayer, which every believing and loving soul continually prays: Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!

speaks in the clearest terms concerning judgment, heaven, hell, and eternity. May we have grace so to profit by this solemn warning, that we may escape the malediction of those on the left hand at the great day, and inherit the blessing which will be pronounced to those on the right hand by the almighty and everlasting Judge! Now unto the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen!

KEIL: After Malachi, no prophet arose in Israel until the time was fulfilled, when the Elijah predicted by him appeared in John the Baptist, and immediately afterwards the Lord came to his temple, that is to say, the incarnate Son of God to his own possession, to make all who receive Him children of God. Upon the Mount of Transfiguration, there appeared both Moses, the founder of the Law, and mediator of the Old Covenant, and Elijah the prophet, as the restorer of the law in Israel, who earnestly prayed, "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou hast turned their heart back again!" to talk with Jesus of his decease, for a practical testimony to us all, that Jesus Christ, who laid down his life for us, to bear our sin, and redeem us from the curse of the law, was the beloved Son of the Father, whom we are to hear, that by believing in his name we may become children of God, and heirs of everlasting life.

M. HENRY on Malachi iii. 14: *Walked mournfully*. They insisted much upon it, that they had *walked mournfully* before God, whereas God had required them to serve Him with gladness and to walk *cheerfully* before Him. They by their own superstitions made the service of God a task and drudgery to themselves, and then complained of it as a hard service. The yoke of Christ is *easy*; it is the yoke of Antichrist that is *heavy*. They complained that they had got nothing by their religion; they denied a future state, and then said: It is vain to serve God, which has indeed some color in it, for if in this life only we had hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable.

NOTE.—Those do a great deal of wrong to God's honor, who say that religion is either an *unprofitable* or an *unpleasant* thing; for the matter is not so; wisdom's *ways* are *pleasantness*, and wisdom's gains are better than that of fine gold.

M. HENRY on ver. 16. *They spake often, etc.* Even in that corrupt and degenerate age, there were some that retained their integrity and zeal for God. In every age, there has been a remnant that feared the Lord, though sometimes but a little remnant. They *thought upon his name*; they seriously considered, and frequently meditated upon the discoveries God had made of Himself, and their meditation of Him was sweet. They consulted the honor of God, and aimed at that as their ultimate end in all they did. They spake often one to another concerning the God they feared, and that name of his, which they thought so much of; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak; and a good man out of the good treasure of his heart will bring forth good things. They that feared the Lord kept together as those that were company for each other; they spake kindly and endearingly one to another, for the preserving and promoting mutual love, that that might not wax *cold* when iniquity did thus abound. They spake edifyingly to one another, for the increase of faith and holiness; they spake one to another in the language of Canaan; when profaneness was to come to so great a height as to trample upon all that is sacred, then they spake often one to another. *The worse others are, the better we should be; when vice is daring, let not virtue be sneaking.* They were industrious to arm themselves and one another against the contagion by mutual instructions and encouragements, and to strengthen one another's hands. As evil communications corrupt good minds and manners, so good communications confirm them.

MOORE: When the wicked are talking against God, the righteous should talk for Him. Religious conversation is necessary, all the more, for the very reasons that often chill and repress it. When a fire burns low, the coals that are alive should be brought near together, that they may be blown into a flame. So when all is cold and dead, living Christians should draw near and seek the breathings of the Spirit, and kindle each other by mutual utterance. The words thus and then spoken shall be heard and recorded in heaven.

DODDRIDGE has versified vers. 16, 17:—

The Lord on mortal worms looks down
From his celestial throne;
And when the wicked swarm around,
He well discerns his own.

The chronicles of heaven shall keep
Their words in transcript fair;
In the Redeemer's book of life,
Their names recorded are.

WORDSWORTH: Malachi, as successor to Zechariah, discharged a peculiar office. Zechariah is one of the most sublime and impassioned among "the goodly fellowship" of the Prophets. The light of the sunset of prophecy is as brilliant and glorious as its noonday splendors. The prophecy of Zechariah is an impetuous torrent, sweeping along in a violent stream, dashing over rugged rocks, and hurling itself down in headlong cataracts, and carrying everything with it in its foaming flood. In Malachi, it tempers its vehemence in the clear haven of a translucent pool; there it rested in peace for four hundred years, till it flowed forth again in the Gospel.

M. HENRY, on ch. iv. ver. 4: Observe the honorable mention that is made of *Moses*, the first writer of the Old Testament, in *Malachi*, the last writer. God calls him *Moses, my servant*, for the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. See how the penmen of Scripture, though they lived at a great distance of time from each other (it was twelve hundred years from Moses to Malachi) concurred in the same thing, all actuated and guided by one and the same spirit.

PRESSEL: We meet sometimes in the Old Testament with passages, like flowers among the rocks, which anticipate the New Testament. Of this kind are the few passages in which God is regarded not as Lord but as Father (Deut. xxxii. 6; 2 Sam. vii. 14; Ps. lxxxix. 27, ciii. 13; Is. lxiii. 16; Jer. xxxi. 20; Hos. i. 10; Mal. iii. 17). God appears in them indeed more as the Father of the whole nation, than in a personal relation to individuals. The joyfulness of the sonship of individuals does not attain prominence, and it was not the prevailing consciousness of the whole people; but these few traces of the fatherhood of God disclose the continuity of both Testaments. The relation, which was not possible for the Old Testament Church, the New Covenant has granted us through Jesus Christ, and what the New has thus granted, the Old had already foreshadowed.

Though the prophecy of Malachi, of the coming of the Messiah, of the judgment accompanying it, and of the sending of the forerunner, contains

nothing at all which would lead us to suppose that the first coming would find its fulfillment in a second at the end of days, before which time there should happen his rejection by his people, his redeeming work on Golgotha, and the whole history of the spread of his Gospel even to the ends of the earth, yet nothing can be concluded from this against the truth, that this last prophecy of the Old Testament had *begun* to be fulfilled in the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth; for the occasion and design of this last prophecy had nothing to do with the subsequent events; for God reveals to his faithful people at every stage, and under all relations, only just so much as they need. The Old Testament has sufficiently disclosed the most glorious glimpses into the Messianic future, as special Psalms, Isaiah, Daniel, Zechariah, and other books testify, but here the object is only to enforce on the light-minded and scoffing contemporaries of the prophet the ineffaceable difference between the godly and ungodly, and the certainty of the day in which that difference would be revealed to all eyes. It was for this object, that what God communicated to them through his prophets of the coming of the Lord, and the sending of his Forerunner, was exactly what they needed.

Vers. 16, 17. *Then they that feared the Lord.* What is the frivolity and scorn of the world, when compared with the refuge of the pious in the word of God, in the communion of those like-minded, in prayer, and in a blessed hereafter!

The Lord knoweth them that are his! This Holy Scripture everywhere testifies. Does also the Spirit of God testify it to our spirits?

The names of those who are registered in our church books are not all found in God's book of remembrance. As it was a great privilege to be numbered among the people of Israel, so it is one now to be numbered in our church books as a Christian; but as then there was a difference between those whose names were in God's book, and those who were not, so it is still now.

"In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name,
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord, the Lamb."

This is the highest distinction to which man can attain: all others are but a shadow, when compared with it. It is a distinction most undeserved, and yet promised to the sincere and pious. It excludes all merit, and yet it is a reward of true piety.

Ch. iv. 1. *For behold the day comes!*

"That day of wrath! that dreadful day!
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?"

Ch. iv. ver. 2. What will the day of the Lord bring to the righteous, according to the promise of the Old Testament? The Sun of righteousness; salvation under his wings; the joy of freedom; the triumph over the common enemies of the Lord and his people.

Ch. iv. vers. 4, 5. Moses and Elijah must even now go before the Lord: How far have they come to us? Or, Conversion is the turning point, where the Old Covenant ends, and the New begins: the heart begins, and the life must end.

Ver. 6. *He shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.* How has the Word of God laid upon us the duty of our conversion, and that of our families! Grant me the heavenly joy, that after many a struggle, I may with rapture say, Dearest Father! Here am I, and those whom thou hast given me! No one of them is lost! all are prepared for thy kingdom! That this may be our experience, we must strive by persevering prayer, and it will, when realized, be a matter of heavenly joy. Finally: The last word of the Old Testament is the threatening of the curse; of the New, the prayer, "Even so come, Lord Jesus!" What should we wish our last word to be?

CHRYSOSTOM on, *Behold the day cometh!* Let us then imagine that that day has come, and let each one examine his reflections, and let him suppose that the Judge is already present, and that all things are revealed and published; for we must not only stand there, but also be *made manifest.* Would you not blush? would you not be beside yourselves? For if now, when the occasion is not yet present, but is merely supposed, and represented to the imagination, we are overwhelmed by our reflections, what shall we do, when that day has come, — when the whole world is present, — when angels and archangels, when crowded myriads, and the hurrying to and fro of all have come; and we are caught up in the clouds, and the gathering together full of terror has come; when trumpet after trumpet shall sound exceeding loud, — when all these have come? For even if there were no hell, what a punishment to be thrust out in the midst of such splendor, and to depart dishonored! For if even now, when a king and his retinue make a triumphal entry, the poor, reflecting on their poverty, receive not so much pleasure from the spectacle, as mortification, that they are not admitted to the presence of the king, nor share his favor, what will it be then! Or, do you consider it a light punishment not to be numbered in that company, not to be counted worthy of that unspeakable glory, to be thrust out from that joyful assembly, and from those unutterable blessings? When too, there shall be darkness, and gnashing of teeth, and everlasting chains, and the worm that never dies, and the fire that is never quenched, and tribulation and anguish, and tongues parched like the rich man's; when we shall beg for mercy, but no one shall hear; when we shall groan and howl because of our torments, and no one shall heed; and look round everywhere, and nowhere shall there be any to comfort us, what shall we say to those in such a condition, what can be more wretched than their souls! what more pitiable! For if we enter a prison, and see the squalid prisoners, some bound and famishing, others shut up in darkness, we weep aloud, we shudder, and avoid imprisonment there, when we are dragged away by force into the very torments of hell, what shall become of us! For these chains are not of iron, but of fire, never to be quenched; nor are our jailers men, whom it is often possible to persuade, but angels, whom we dare not look upon, because they are exceedingly enraged, that we have insulted their Lord. We do not see *there,* as here, some bringing money, some food, others comforting words, so that the prisoners obtain some mitigation. Everything *there* is beyond the reach of alleviation. Even if Noah, or Job, or Daniel, should see their own families suffering punishment, they would not dare to relieve them. For natural sympathy is there extinguished. For while it is the case, that righteous parents have wicked children, and righteous children wicked parents, that the pleasure may there be unalloyed, and that those who enjoy the blessings may not lose their fruition from sympathy, even this nat-

ural affection, I say, is extinguished, and they share in their Lord's indignation against their own offspring. For if common men, when they see their children wicked, disinherit them, and cut them off from the family, much more shall the righteous then. Therefore, let no one hope for good things, who has done no good work, though he may have ten thousand righteous ancestors, "for every one shall receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done." And here I think I will make use of this fear to attack the adulterers, and not them only, but all those who do any wrong thing whatever. Let us ourselves hear therefore these things; if you have the fire of lust, oppose to it that fire, and being extinguished, it will quickly go out. If you are about to utter anything uncharitable, reflect on the gnashing of teeth, and your fear will be a bridle to you; if you wish to steal, hear the Judge commanding and saying, "Bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness," and you will in this way cast out your lust; if you are a drunkard, and spend your time in debauchery, hear the rich man saying, "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my parched tongue," and not obtaining his request, and you will get rid of this passion. If you love luxury, consider the tribulation and anguish there, and you will desire it no more; if you are harsh and cruel, remember those virgins who, because their lamps had gone out, were shut out of the bridal chamber, and you will soon become kind-hearted. Are you slothful? Think of him who hid the talent, and you will become more ardent than fire. Does covetousness of your neighbor's property consume you? Think of the worm that never dies, and you will easily get rid of this disease, and will reform all other sins, for He has commanded nothing burdensome or grievous. Why then do his commandments seem grievous to us? From our slothfulness. For as when we are zealous, even those things which seem intolerable will be light and easy, so when we are slothful, the things which are tolerable will appear to us grievous. In view of all this, let us not regard those who live luxuriously, but remember their end; let us not regard the extortioners, but remember their end,—here cares and fears and anguish of soul, and there everlasting chains; let us not regard the lovers of glory, but remember what it begets,—here slavery and hypocrisy, and there intolerable loss, and perpetual burning. For if we would thus reason with ourselves, and continually oppose these and the like things to our wicked lusts, we should speedily cast out the love of the present, and kindle the love of the future. Let us now therefore kindle it, and burn with it. For if the meditation on these things, imperfect as it may be, gives such pleasure, think how much delight a perfect realization will be. Happy, thrice happy, yea, infinitely happy are those who enjoy such blessings, as wretched, thrice wretched are those who suffer their opposite! That we may not be of the latter class, but of the former, let us choose virtue, for in this way we shall obtain these future blessings. God grant that we may all obtain them, through the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, power, and honor now and always, and for ever and ever. Amen!

NEW METRICAL TRANSLATION.

SECTION I.

Jehovah's distinguishing Love to Israel (Chap. i. 1–6).

1 The burden of the word of Jehovah to Israel, by the hand of Malachi.
2 I have loved you, saith Jehovah,
And if ye say, "Wherein hast thou loved us?"
Was not Esau brother to Jacob? saith Jehovah,
And yet I loved Jacob,
3 And Esau I hated;
And made his mountains a desolation,
And his inheritance for the jackals of the desert.
4 Although Edom say, "We are ruined,
Yet will we build again the ruins;"
Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts;
They may build, but I will pull down;
And men shall call them, "The land of wickedness;
And the people against whom Jehovah is angry forever."
5 And your eyes shall see it, and ye shall say,
Great be Jehovah over the land of Israel!

SECTION II.

Rebuke of the Priests (Chap. i. 6–ii. 9).

6 A son honors his father,
And a servant his master;
But if I am a father, where is mine honor?
And if I am a master, where is my fear?
Saith Jehovah of Hosts to you, ye priests, that despise my name.
Yet ye say, "Wherewith have we despised thy name?"
7 In offering polluted bread upon mine altar.
And if ye say, "Wherewith have we polluted thee?"
In that ye say, "The table of the Lord is contemptible."
And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice,
(Ye say) "There is nothing evil!"
8 And when ye offer the lame and the sick,
(Ye say), "There is nothing evil!"
Offer it then to thy governor;
Will he be gracious to thee,
Or accept thy person?
Saith Jehovah of Hosts.
9 And now, I pray you, beseech God to be gracious unto us!
(By your hand hath this been done!)
Will he show favor,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts?
10 O that some one of you would even shut the doors,
That ye might not light the fire upon mine altar to no purpose!
I have no pleasure in you, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
And sacrifice from your hand I will not accept.
11 For from the rising of the sun even to its setting,
My name shall be great among the nations,
And in every place shall incense be offered to my name,
And a pure offering;
For my name shall be great among the nations.
12 But ye profane it,
In that ye say, "The table of the Lord is polluted,
And the fruit thereof, even its food, is contemptible."
13 Ye say also, Behold, what weariness!
And ye snuff at it,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts.
And ye bring that which is stolen, and lame, and sick,
And present it for an offering!
Shall I accept it from your hand?
Saith Jehovah.
14 And cursed be the deceiver,
Who, when there is in his flock a male,
Vows and sacrifices to Jehovah that which is blemished;
For I am a great king, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
And my name is feared among the nations.

1 And now, ye priests, this sentence is to you!
2 If ye will not hearken,
If ye will not lay it to heart,
To give glory to my name, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
I will send a curse upon you,
And I will curse your blessings;

Yea, I have cursed them already.
Because ye do not lay it to heart.
3 Behold I will rebuke for you the seed;
And I will spread dung upon your faces,
The dung of your solemn feasts,
And ye shall be taken away to it.
4 And ye shall know that I have sent to you this sentence,
That my covenant with Levi may continue,
5 Saith Jehovah of Hosts.
My covenant with him was life and peace,
And I gave them to him for fear,
And he feared me, and reverenced my name.
6 The law of truth was in his mouth,
And unrighteousness was not found in his lips;
He walked with me in truth and equity,
And turned many away from iniquity.
7 For the lips of the priest should keep knowledge,
And men should seek the law from his mouth;
For he is a messenger of Jehovah of Hosts.
8 But ye have departed from the way,
Ye have caused many to stumble at the law,
And ye have made void the covenant with Levi,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts;
Therefore will I also make you
Despicable and base before all the people;
Because ye have not kept my ways,
But have had respect to persons in the law.

SECTION III.

Rebuke of Divorce and Mixed Marriages (Chap. ii. 10–17).

10 Have we not all one Father?
Hath not one God created us?
Why do we act treacherously one toward another,
And profane the Covenant of our fathers?
11 Judah hath acted treacherously,
And an abomination is committed in Israel, and in Jerusalem,
For Judah hath profaned the holy people of Jehovah, which He loveth,
And hath married the daughter of a strange God.
12 Jehovah will cut off from the tents of Jacob the man that doeth this,
The waker and the answerer,
And him that bringeth a sacrifice to Jehovah of Hosts.
13 And this second thing ye do,
Ye cover the altar of Jehovah with tears,
With weeping, and with groans,
So that He hath no more regard to the offering,
Nor accepts it as well-pleasing from your hand.
14 And if ye say, "Wherefore? (doth He not accept?)"
Because Jehovah has been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth,
Against whom thou hast acted treacherously,
While she was thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.
15 But did He not make one (pair)?
Though He had a residue of the Spirit?
And wherefore one?

He sought a godly seed.
Therefore take heed to your spirit,
And act not treacherously to the wife of thy youth!
16 For I hate divorce,
Saith Jehovah, the God of Israel,
And him that covers with cruelty his garment.

SECTION IV.

The Coming of the Angel of the Covenant for Judgment (Chap. ii. 17–iii. 6).

17 Ye have wearied Jehovah with your words,
And if ye say, "Wherein have we wearied Him?"
In that ye say, "Every evil doer
Is good in the eyes of Jehovah,
And in them He hath delight,"
Or, "Where is the God of judgment?"

1 Behold, I send my messenger,
That he may prepare the way before me;
And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple,
And the Angel of the Covenant, whom ye desire,
Behold he comes, saith Jehovah of Hosts.
2 But who can endure the day of his coming?
And who can stand at his appearing?
For he is like the smelter's fire,
And like the lye of the washer.
3 And He will sit as a smelter, and purifier of silver,
And will purify the sons of Levi,
And will refine them, as gold and silver,
That they may offer to Jehovah sacrifices in righteousness.
4 And the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to Jehovah,
As in the days of former times,
And as in past years.
5 And I will come near to you to judgment;
And I will be a swift witness
Against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against those who swear for deceit,
And against those who defraud the hireling of his wages,
And oppress the widow and the fatherless,
And turn aside the stranger from his right,
And fear not me, saith Jehovah of Hosts.
6 For I, Jehovah, change not:
Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

SECTION V.

Rebuke for Neglect of Tithes and Offerings (Chap. iii. 7–12).

7 From the days of your fathers ye have departed from mine ordinances, And have not kept them;
Return to me, and I will return to you,

Saith Jehovah of Hosts.
And ye say, "Wherein shall we return?"
Will a man defraud God, that ye defrauded me?
"And ye say, "Wherein have we defrauded thee?"
In the tithe and in the heave offering.
Ye are cursed with a curse.
Yet ye defraud me, even the whole nation.
10 Bring ye the whole tithe into the treasure house,
That there may be food in my house,
And prove me now herewith,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts,
If I will not open you the windows of heaven,
And pour out upon you a blessing till there is not room enough.
11 And I will rebuke for you the devourer,
That he may not destroy the fruit of your ground,
Nor will your vine be barren in the field,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts.
12 And all nations shall call you blessed,
For ye shall be a joyful land,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts.

SECTION VI.

Retribution of the Righteous and the Wicked (Chap. iii).

13 Your words have been bold against me, saith Jehovah;
And ye say, "What have we spoken with one another against thee?"
14 Ye have said, It is a vain thing to serve God,
And what gain is it, that we have kept his ordinance,
And walked mournfully because of Jehovah of Hosts?
15 For now we call the proud happy.
Yea, the doers of wickedness are built up,
Yea, they have tempted God, and have been delivered.
16 Then those, who feared Jehovah, conversed with one another,
And Jehovah attended and heard;
And a book of remembrance was written before Him,
For them that feared Jehovah,
And that thought upon his name.
17 And they shall be my property, saith Jehovah,
In the day which I appoint,
And I will spare them,
As a man spareth his own son, that serveth him.
18 Then shall ye again discern
[The difference] between the righteous and the wicked,
Between him who serveth God,
And him that serveth Him not.

IV. 1 For behold the day cometh, burning like a furnace,
And all the proud, and every doer of wickedness shall be chaff,
And the coming day shall burn them up,
Saith Jehovah of Hosts,
So that it will not leave them root nor branch.
2 But unto you, that fear my name,
Shall the Sun of Righteousness arise
With healing in his wings.

And ye shall go forth, and leap [for joy],
Like calves of the stall.
3 And ye shall tread down the wicked,
For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet,
In the day which I appoint, saith Jehovah of Hosts.
4 Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant,
Which I commanded him upon Horeb for all Israel,
My statutes and my precepts!
5 Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet,
Before the day of Jehovah come,
The great and terrible day.
6 He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the sons,
And the heart of the sons to the fathers,
That I may not come
And smite the land with a curse.